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AND REOCCUPATION OF
EAST TEXAS,
1773-1779

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THE SPANISH ABANDONMENT AND RE-OCCUPATION OF EAST TEXAS, 1773-1779.¹

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In 1772 the Spanish government decided to give back to nature and the Indians, temporarily at least, all that part of Texas north-east of San Antonio de Béxar and Bahía del Espíritu Santo, some parts of which Spain had occupied, continuously even if weakly, for more than half a century. That this plan failed was due primarily to the attachment of some of the settlers of the district to their homes; to the desire of the provincial authorities to main-

¹BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.—This paper, with the exception of the first two subdivisions of section I, which are based mainly on secondary authorities, has been prepared almost entirely from manuscript materials hitherto unused, found in the Archivo General y Público of Mexico and in the Béxar Archives in the possession of the University of Texas. The principal documents used are the following:

1. Expediente sobre proposiciones del Gobernador de Texas Baron de Ripperdá, para erección de un Nuevo Precidio, y Empezar una cruda Guerra contra los Apaches Lipanes, hacienda Alianza con las Naciones del Norte. MS. Folios 107. The papers included cover the years 1771-1773.

2. Autos que se han introducido por los Vecinos del Presidio de los Adaes, Sobre que les deje vecindar en el de la Mision de los Ais, y establecimto. del Pueblo de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli. MS. Folios 22. The papers fall within the years 1773-1774.

3. Quaderno que Corresponde para el complotto del Expediente señalado con el Numo. 1 [number 2 above] remetido con fecha 31 del

tain an influence over the Indian tribes of East Texas, as a make-weight against the hostile Apache and Comanche Indians and against Spain's new neighbors, the English; and to the temporizing and double policy of the viceroy. The story of the removal of the Spanish settlers from the eastern frontier in pursuance of this plan and of their early return and its sanction by the local government, regardless of the royal policy, is not without human interest nor without importance in the history of the Spanish occupation of the Southwest.

I. CONDITIONS LEADING TO A NEW FRONTIER POLICY.

In order to understand why Spain thus voluntarily resolved to relinquish her hold upon so vast and so rich a stretch of country, it is necessary to examine briefly conditions existing at the time

proximo pasado Marzo del corriente año. MS. Folios 53. The papers fall within the years 1773-1774.

4. Expediente Sobre que el Vecindario del Pueblo de Ntra. Señora del Pilar de Bucareli se le destine Parroco, por cuenta de la Real Hacienda. MS. Folios 21. The papers are dated 1775-1779.

5. Los Vecinos del extinguido Presidio, y Poblacion de los Adais, hasta el Numero de Sesenta y tres, que sin establecimiento alguno se hayan agregados al de San Antonio de Bexar, y Villa de San Fernando; Sobre que atendiendo al infeliz estado, en que han quedado, por haber abandonado sus Casas y Tierras; y á fidelidad, con que han servido, y estan, prontas, á continuar sirviendo a S. M. en aquella Fronttera, se les conceda por el Señor Governador en Gefe, Comandante General alguno establecimiento para que puedan Subsistir con sus Familias. MS. Folios 32. The papers fall within the period 1778-1779.

6. Representacion del Justicia de la Poblacion de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli; Sobre libertad de Diezmos para aquellos Moradores. MS. Folios 10. The correspondence falls within the period 1777-1778.

7. Expediente sobre el abandono del Pueblo de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli: Quaderno 5°. MS. Folios 53. Period covered, 1778-1780.

8. Expediente sobre el abandono del Pueblo de Bucarely, y establecer Comercio con los Yndios Gentiles del Norte. Quaderno 6°. MS. Folios 46. Period covered, 1780-1782. Number 7 is cited in this article as "Expediente sobre el abandono," and number 8 as "Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establecer Comercio."

All of the above documents are collected in volume LI of Sección de Historia of the Archivo General. The original papers of which No. 1 is a copy are in volume XX of the Sección de Provincias Internas. Num-

along the north Mexican border as a whole, and more particularly those on the Texas-Louisiana frontier.

1. *Indian troubles in the frontier provinces.*—At the middle of the eighteenth century it seemed as if most of what had been accomplished for civilization in northern Mexico through the bravery and religious zeal of the Spaniards was about to be destroyed by Indian revolts within and Indian attacks from without. Nearly all along the northern frontier from Sonora to Texas the interior tribes were becoming less docile and those outside more aggressive.

In Sonora the chief trouble was from within. In 1751 the Pimas living near the head of the Gulf of California revolted under their native leader, Don Luis, destroyed most of the Spanish missions, pueblos, and ranches in and near the valley of the Altar River, and drove out many of the settlers. After several

bers 2 and 3, as contained in volume LI, were copied from copies contained in volume XCIII of Sección de Historia.

9. Consulta del Sor. Comandante Gral. de las Provas. de Oriente sobre solicitud que han hecho los Yndios Horcoquisac, Atacapaces, Vidais, y Cocos, pidiendole se establezca la Mision del Orcoquisac: sobre que se separe del empleo de Tente. de Gobernador á Don Antonio Gil Ybarbo, etc. MS., 1788. In Volume XCIII, Sección de Historia, Archivo General.

10. Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz de las Naciones del Norte: y comercio ilicito de los Franceses de la Nueva Orleans. MS. Folios 48. A copy is contained in Volume XCIII of Sección de Historia, Archivo General.

11. Correspondence of Governors Ripperdá and Cabello concerning Texas, in volumes XCIX and C of Sección de Provincias Internas. Original MS.

12. Derrotero, Diario, y Calculacion de leguas, que en descubrimiento por derecho desde esta Provincia del Nueva Mexico hasta el Fuerte de Natchitoches y la de los Texas, de orden superior voy a practicar en compañía de Dn. Pedro Vial, comisionado a esta proposito, yo el abajo y lo ultimo firmado, Francisco Xavier Frago. Villa de Santa Fé, veinte y quatro de Junio de mil setecientos ochenta y ocho. Signed also by Pedro Vial. Document No. 17, volume XLIII, Sección de Historia, Archivo General. MS.

13. Reglamento é instruccion para los presidios que se han de formar en la línea de frontera de la Nueva España. Resuelto por el rey en cédula de 10 de setiembre de 1772, in Arrillaga, *Recopilacion de leyes, Decretos, Bandos, Reglamentos, Circulares y Providencias de los Supremos Poderes de los Estados-Unidos Mexicanos*, etc. (Mexico, 1835) Vol. IX, 139-189. Printed first in Madrid, 1772.

months of fighting and diplomacy quiet was restored, but the Indians continued threatening, and a blight rested upon the once flourishing Spanish establishments. Further south, in the same province, the Seri Indians soon afterwards destroyed the new mission at Guaymas, and for several years held the place against the Spaniards. Peace made with the tribe only by extravagant promises was soon broken, and war continued, greatly to the discouragement of colonization and missionary work in the region south of the Altar. Northeastern Sonora suffered from raids by Apaches from the Gila country. These attacks, if not so continuous as the disturbances caused by the near-by Pimas and Seris, were even more disastrous because of the great numbers of the invaders.

In what is now Chihuahua—then northern Nueva Viscaya—the devastation was perhaps somewhat less than in Sonora, but, nevertheless, there was general complaint there that the Spanish establishments were constantly exposed to destruction by the Apaches and renegade mission Indians, while the unconquered savages of Bolson de Mapimí infested the line of travel northward to Parral.

In New Mexico the Yutes, Apaches, and Comanches, all or severally, gave trouble nearly every year. In 1746 the last-named tribe had made an unusually violent attack upon Pecos, Galisteo, and other places, causing considerable loss of life along with the destruction of property. This outrage was followed in succeeding years by wars of vengeance that greatly disturbed the peace and the prosperity of the community.

In spite of the exceptional prosperity of Nuevo Santander at this time,¹ it and Coahuila, like Chihuahua and Texas, suffered from both apostate mission Indians and invading Apaches. The danger from the Apaches seems everywhere to have been less to human life than to property. The chief resources of the northern Span-

¹It was between 1748 and 1751 that the province of Nuevo Santander, which lay south of Coahuila and Texas, was so successfully conquered and colonized by José de Escandón. Notwithstanding the general prosperity of the province, however, which was quite out of keeping with conditions in the northern provinces as a whole, it was necessary to organize in 1757 a general campaign against troublesome Indians. By means of this campaign some of the natives were reduced to mission life, and some were driven into Coahuila or across the Río Grande (Prieto, *Historia, Geografía Estadística del Estado de Tamaulipas*; Bancroft, *Mexico*, III, 342-346).

ish settlers were their droves and herds of horses, mules, cattle, and small stock, and to steal these was the main object of the Apache raids. Treacherous to the last degree, these Indians would enter a village or *presidio* in the guise of friendship, and upon leaving run off all the stock of the place. As the Apaches were pushed south by their inveterate enemies, the Comanches, such thieveries, not always unattended by murder, occurred with increasing frequency, to the utter despair of many of the frontier establishments.

The Texas settlements, particularly San Antonio de Béxar and Bahía del Espíritu Santo, had long been infested by the thieving Apaches and Karankawas, and now one section of the province was beset by a more blood-thirsty enemy, the Comanches. This tribe was first heard of in Texas in 1743. They did no serious damage until 1758, but in March of that year they, in conjunction with a number of northeastern tribes, who had hitherto given no trouble, attacked and burned the newly founded mission at San Saba, on the San Saba River, murdered some of the missionaries and soldiers, set fire to the stockade of the *presidio* and drove off part of the stock. The occasion assigned for this attack was that the San Saba mission was designed to minister to the Apaches, mortal enemies of the Comanches. The presidials were terrified, they clamored for a removal to another site, and were only with difficulty kept from deserting. In the following year Colonel Parilla went out with five hundred men to punish the Indians, but instead he suffered an ignominious defeat. In the country of the Taovayases his troops were attacked by a large body of the allies, before whom they fled, leaving behind them baggage and artillery.¹ This victory over the Spaniards, which for more than a decade went unpunished, served to lessen the prosperity of the none too flourishing Texas settlements. The Comanches and other northern tribes continued to trouble the *presidio* of San Saba and even sought the Apaches in the neighborhood of Béxar.²

This condition of affairs called forth numerous reports from

¹See on page 108 a reference to the cannon left by Parilla.

²This section is based upon Bancroft's *Mexico* (Vol. III), his *North Mexican States and Texas* (Vol. I), and his *Arizona and New Mexico*; Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística del Estado de Tamaulipas*; Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*; the royal *Reglamento é instruccion* of 1772 (see biblio-

officials concerning the Indian depredations, and numerous appeals from the settlers for protection. These reports and appeals came to the notice of the king and he, in 1753, enjoined the viceroy to take the matter in hand. Nothing being done, in 1756 the king commissioned the Marqués de Rubí, a Spanish field-marshal, to inspect and make a report upon all the defences of the interior provinces. The usual delay ensued, and it was ten years before Rubí actually began his tour of inspection. But finally, in March, 1766, he left Mexico City, accompanied by his engineer, Nicolás de la Fora, and passed through one province after another, arriving in Texas in August, 1767.¹ The results of this visit are told further on.

2. *The cession of Louisiana to Spain, 1762.*—At the same time that a demand was growing for stronger defences along the frontier as a whole, there came a change that temporarily lessened the strain on the northeastern Texas border. This change was the cession of Louisiana by France to Spain in 1762, at the close of the long struggle in America known as the French and Indian War.

The proximity of the French had from the first been the characteristic motive for maintaining Spanish settlements in East Texas. News of La Salle's fortification on Matagorda Bay was what led Spain, after more than a century and a half's inactivity, to found in 1690 the first mission in Texas. Mission San Francisco de los Tèxas, as the establishment was called, was placed far to the east, near the Neches River. This mission and another that was founded soon after, being abandoned, it required new French encroachments, in the form of San Denis's trading expedition across Texas (1714-1715) to bring the Spanish back to the frontier. Whatever may have been the designs of San Denis or of the government behind him, the Spanish authorities feared danger, and proceeded again to secure a foot-hold in the country threatened. An expedition sent out in 1715 re-established the

graphical notes, page 69); and a report made in 1784 by Domingo Cabello, governor of Texas, on the Indian affairs of Coahuila and Texas.

¹Bonilla, *Breve Compendio* (Translation by Elizabeth Howard West in THE QUARTERLY, VIII, 59. All of my citations of the *Breve Compendio* are to this translation); Cavo, *Los Tres Siglos de Mexico* (Mexico, 1835-1838), II, 184.

Texas mission, founded five new ones in the vicinity, and placed a garrison at Presidio de los Texas, or Dolores. All of these new missions were nearer the French frontier than San Francisco, the first one, while one of them, San Miguel de Linares, was beyond the Sabine River, squarely in front of the French post at Natchitoches.

The frontier military policy thus begun by establishing Presidio de los Texas, was developed by war between France and Spain. A French attack on Pensacola in 1719 was followed by the flight of the frightened Spanish garrison and missionaries from the frontier to Béxar. As soon as possible the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo was sent (1721) to recover the province and to strengthen its defences. He re-established the abandoned missions and Presidio de los Texas, built a new *presidio* called Pilar de los Adaes near Mission San Miguel, and garrisoned it with a hundred soldiers.

While the defences of the northeast had thus been first provided and later strengthened to guard against the danger of French encroachment, one of the principal reasons for weakening them again was an official opinion that this fear was unfounded. In 1727-28 General Pedro de Rivera inspected all of the Texas *presidios*; and, at the request of the viceroy, reported the changes that he thought should be made in them. Among these recommendations one was that, since the Indians of the northeast were peaceful, Presidio de los Texas was unnecessary and should be abandoned; and another was that, since the danger from the French garrison at Natchitoches was very slight, the Spanish guard at Adaes was unnecessarily large, and should be reduced from one hundred to sixty soldiers. These recommendations were carried out a year later. One result of this change was that the Querétaran friars, whose missions depended on Presidio de los Texas, moved their missions to San Antonio de Béxar (1731). This left on the frontier the *presidio* of Pilar de los Adaes and the missions at Adaes, Los Ais, and Nacogdoches.

For a score or more of years no important change was made in East Texas, but the chief matters of interest there were a dispute over the boundary between Spanish and French territory and complaints about French smuggling on the border. The increase of this species of trade along the Trinity led to the establishment

about 1755 of a new *presidio* on that river, which, after two removals was located at Oreoquisac, the site of the mission of Nuestra Señora de la Luz, near the present town of Liberty.¹

It is thus seen that fear of the French, in one form or another, had from the very beginning been a decisive factor in the Spanish policy on the Texas-Louisiana frontier. But in 1762 came the cession of Louisiana to Spain, and it was felt that danger from the French was largely removed. This transfer gave Spain England instead of France for a neighbor, and, as the English settlements were as yet far distant, they were less feared for the present than had been the French settlements of Louisiana while subject to a foreign power. This alteration of French relations just at the time of especial stress all along the rest of the frontier of New Spain helps to explain the radical change that was now made in the Spanish policy in East Texas.

3. *Rubí's inspection and recommendations.*—What the Marqués de Rubí saw when at last he made his inspection was recorded in the diary kept and the map made by Nicolás de la Fora and in the *dictamen*, or opinion, which Rubí himself sent later to the government.² With respect to the frontier in general, Rubí reported in detail the bad condition of affairs which has been briefly

¹See Garrison, *Texas*, chs. III, IV, V, VIII; Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*, in THE QUARTERLY, VIII, 12-59; R. C. Clark, "The Beginnings of Texas," *Ibid.*, V, and his "Luis Juchereau de San Denis and the Re-establishment of the Tejas Missions," *Ibid.*, VI, 1-26; Mattie Alice Austin, "The Municipal Government of San Fernando de Béjar," *Ibid.*, VIII. My opinion as to the location of Oreoquisac is based on the La Fora map (see next note) and a map drawn by Gil Ybarbo in 1777 (see page 118).

²The diary kept by la Fora was entitled *Viage del ingeniero a Sta Fé* (1766, MS., in what Bancroft calls the Pinart Collection. See Bancroft, *Arizona and New Mexico*, 258, note.) I have not had access to this diary. A copy of the map, if not the original, was once in volume V of *Sección de Historia*, Archivo General. I find a statement to this effect in some notes made by Father Talamantes, and the evidence of its having been torn out is still visible in the volume. Bancroft knew of the existence of this map, but was unable to find it (see his *Arizona and New Mexico*, 258, note). I fortunately found a photograph of it in the possession of the noted scholar, Mrs. Zelia Nuttall, of Coyacán, Mexico, who generously allowed me to copy it. The tradition is, I believe, that the map was taken from its place by some one connected with Maximilian's government. A copy of the part of the *Dictamen* bearing on Texas is contained

indicated hereinbefore.¹ What he found in Texas, which is our chief concern here, was, when viewed as the results of three-quarters of a century's occupation, discouraging enough. Beyond San Antonio de Béxar toward the northeast the nearest Spanish establishment was the mission at Nacogdoches, across the Neches² River, administered by one missionary, but without a resident Indian, either converted or under instruction. A few leagues further on was the mission at Los Ais, with a few ranches round about. Here lived two missionaries in the same inactivity as those at Nacogdoches, without a single Indian upon whom to "exercise their calling."³

On the Louisiana frontier, seven leagues from Natchitoches, were the mission and *presidio* of Adaes. At this mission, like the others without neophytes, were two missionaries. The *presidio* was garrisoned by sixty soldiers, who, with the Indians in the neighborhood peaceful and Louisiana a Spanish province, had nothing to do. Round about the *presidio* in a village and on ranches was a declining population of some thirty families. Toward the south, on the eastern bank of the Trinity, "amid a thousand misfortunes and inconveniences," was the *presidio* of Orcoquisac, with a company of thirty-one soldiers and an imaginary mission with two *padres*. Though an attempt had been made to establish a colony there, the place had no citizen population. Finally, north of Béxar, at San Saba, now outside the limits of Texas, was a small garrison of soldiers, at the mercy of the Comanches and their allies, as had recently been proved.

Here, then, said Rubí, was a stretch of country beyond Béxar several hundred miles wide over which Spain claimed dominion,

in "Quaderno que Corresponde," Vol. 51, Sección de Historia, Archivo General (see bibliographical note, page 67). This is the only part of it that I have seen or have been able to locate.

¹Bancroft, *North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 585, 629-630.

²It may be a matter of interest to know that the favorite and almost invariable form of spelling the name of this river in the documents on which this study is based is Nechas.

³Reference to page — will show that a few baptisms were made at these missions as late as the time when Rubí made his inspection.

but which was crossed by only two rude paths, and occupied by only three small garrisons, a handful of impoverished settlers, and four useless missions.¹

As a general result of his inspection, which revealed to him some establishments stagnant and useless and others without defence, Rubí concluded—what ought to have been seen long before—that Spain was trying to spread over too much ground, and that a wise policy for her to pursue would be to distinguish between her true and her “imaginary” dominions, and to sacrifice the latter to the former.²

Consistently with this conclusion, he made some far-reaching recommendations. The central one was to rearrange the frontier *presidios* in such a way as to form a cordon of fifteen strongholds placed at regular intervals between Bahía del Espíritu Santo, in Texas, and the head of the Gulf of California, with San Antonio de Béxar and Santa Fé as outposts. This line he considered the true frontier of New Spain, upon the defence of which all efforts should be concentrated.³

This central recommendation involved radical changes in Texas. Those parts of the province that lay beyond San Antonio de Béxar he regarded as only “imaginary possessions,” and he believed that, considering the pressing need elsewhere, they should be abandoned. San Saba, he said was at the mercy of the Comanches and their allies. Orcoquisac was at best of little use, and Adaes was bringing to a close a career that had been unfortunate from the outset. His first recommendation immediately affecting Texas was, therefore, that San Saba be deserted; that the *presidio* and mission of Orcoquisac be either extinguished or removed to a place somewhere in the neighborhood of Béxar and Bahía del Espíritu Santo; and that Adaes either be annexed to the government of Louisiana, or that it be extinguished and the settlers there brought near Béxar, or if they preferred, allowed to settle somewhere in Louisiana.⁴

¹Rubí, Dietamen, section 25.

²*Ibid.*

³Bancroft, *North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 585; Rubí, Dietamen, section 17.

⁴Dietamen, sections 17, 20, 25. The proposals are not given in the order of the document, but rather in that determined by the view-point of this paper.

Rubí's next proposal was to strengthen the defences of San Antonio de Béxar and increase the population in its neighborhood. By abandoning the northeastern settlements, Béxar would be left, he said, the frontier establishment of all the internal provinces — distant, indeed, more than fifty leagues from the nearest of the *presidios* in the proposed cordon. Being thus isolated, it would still be in its present danger from the Apache-Comanche wars. The thieving Lipan Apaches¹ living between Béxar and the Rio Grande would not only continue to be unpleasant neighbors themselves, but they would still attract to the settlements their enemies, the Comanches and their allies. Moreover, if the Comanches, now dangerous only to San Saba, as the friend of the Apaches, should ever invade the interior, a circumstance not to be expected,² Béxar would become the chief object of their attacks. These considerations led him even to suggest withdrawing the villa of San Fernando and the costly and imposing but decadent missions at Béxar to the Rio Grande, in the shelter of the projected line of *presidios*. Refraining, however, from so radical a proposal, he advised that a fortification should be built to protect the citizens of the villa of San Fernando, adjacent to the *presidio* of Béxar, and that the garrison of the *presidio* should be increased from twenty-three to eighty men by bringing to Béxar the soldiers from San Saba, Adaes, and Ocoquisac, unless the last should be needed at Bahía del Espíritu Santo. The governor, residing at Béxar, should, he thought, be made commander of the *presidio* of San Juan Bautista, on the Rio Grande, which might be moved nearer Béxar if circumstances demanded it. Since fear of Indians had been the chief obstacle to the growth of population, he predicted that such a strengthening of the defence of Béxar would make it possible to colonize in its vicinity on a considerable scale.³

With regard to the Apaches, who were, as we have seen, troubling

¹The branch of the Apaches who were infesting Texas were the Lipans, commonly called the Lipan Apaches.

²Rubí reflected the fears of some when he said that he could not subscribe to the opinion that the Indians might be incited by the European neighbors of Spain toward the northeast to invade the interior Spanish provinces (Dictamen, section 17).

³Dictamen, section 17.

the frontier from Chihuahua to Texas, and the settlements of Coahuila and Texas in particular, Rubí declared mercy to be ill-timed, and maintained that since the Comanches came to the settlements only in pursuit of the Apaches, danger from the Comanches and their allies would cease as soon as the Apaches should be exterminated. He recommended, therefore, that Apaches should no longer be admitted to the shelter of the missions and *presidios*, where they would only prove their treachery, but that a vigorous war should be waged against them, and that, when conquered, the tribe should be dissolved and the captives taken to the interior of Mexico.¹

Turning his attention to the Gulf coast policy, he said, contrary to the opinions of some, that it was impossible, even if necessary, to occupy the Texas part of that coast by land because of its inaccessibility from the Gulf and of its bad climatic conditions. He advised, therefore, that the *presidio* of Bahía del Espíritu Santo should remain where it was, on the San Antonio River, for these reasons as well as to protect the well-stocked ranches already established there and the people whom it was proposed to remove thither from the eastern frontier.²

Rubí realized that there would be no lack of persons to call him unpatriotic in suggesting so enormous a diminution of the king's dominion; but he reminded such that the Spanish hold upon East Texas was so slight as to be only nominal; that relinquishing this shadowy grasp would be off-set by a saving of forty-four thousand *pesos* a year; and that the spiritual and the political losses would be slight. On these points he said: "With respect to the conversion of the unfaithful, not a Christian or a neophyte, . . . will be lost on the day when the four missions are suppressed; and with respect to the protection of our real dominions, by retiring this figurative frontier of two hundred leagues and more, we shall substitute for this weak barrier one that is being more respectably constituted on the Colorado [Red] and Missouri Rivers, since the present governor of that colony [Louisiana] . . .

¹Dietamen, section 26; Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*, 61; Garrison, *Texas*, 91. A few years after this time, Governor Ripperdá recommended using the northern nations as allies in the war against the Apaches (Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*, 66). See also, *post*, p. 92.

²Dietamen, section 19.

much more according to the intentions of the king, impedes communication and traffic between it and the dominions of this realm."¹

We should not, of course, regard these proposals of the Marqués de Rubí as a recommendation that Spain should relinquish her title to the territory in question, or that she should never undertake to occupy it, for they were conditioned by the fact that beyond Texas lay another possession nominally Spanish, which, in a sense, made Texas an interior province. But they did mean that Rubí considered that for a long time to come, at least, it would be useless for Spain to try to colonize or to exercise any real control in the country between Louisiana and San Antonio de Béxar; and the adoption of these recommendations by the king was, on the part of the central government, a confession of the same sort.

II. THE NEW FRONTIER POLICY, 1772.

1. *The royal order of 1772.*—Rubí's report passed to the hands of the king, and, after the usual deliberate course of Spanish legislation, the monarch issued, on September 10, 1772, an order popularly known as the "New Regulation of *Presidios*."² This was practically an adoption of Rubí's proposals, with the supplementary legislation requisite to carry them into effect.³

We have seen that the central point of Rubí's plan was to con-

¹Dictamen, section 25.

²Reglamento é instrucción para los presidios que han de formar en la linea de frontera de la Nueva España. Resuelto por el Rey en cédula de 10 de Setiembre de 1772. First printed in Madrid, 1772. The copy of the document which I have used is in Arrillaga, *Recopilación de Leyes, decretos, Bandos, Reglamentos, Circulares y Providencias de los Supremos Poderes de los Estados-Unidos Mexicanos*, etc. (Mexico, 1835), IX, 139-189. I have unfortunately been unable thus far to find any records revealing the inner process by which this legislation was brought about.

³On the changes made on the northern frontier in consequence of this royal order, see, besides, the authorities already cited, Revillagigedo's Informe de Abril, 1793 (in Cavo, *Tres Siglos*, III, 112), and his Carta de 27 de Diciembre, in *Diccionario Universal de Historia y de Geografía*, V, 426 (Mexico, 1853-1856, 4to 10 Vols., and Madrid, 1846-1850, 4to 8 Vols.); Velasco, *Sonora, Its Extent, etc.* (San Francisco, 1861); Eseudero, *Noticias Estadísticas de Sonora y Sinaloa* (Mexico, 1849).

concentrate effort upon the defence of what he considered the real possessions of New Spain. To do this it was necessary to place the fortifications in such relations that one could support another, and near enough together to prevent hostile Indians breaking through the intervening spaces. Accordingly, the royal order provided that the fifteen frontier *presidios* should be placed forty leagues apart in an irregular line extending from Altar, near the head of the Gulf of California, as the westernmost, to Bahía del Espíritu Santo, on the San Antonio River in Texas, as the easternmost. The intermediate *presidios* of the line, named in order from west to east, were to be Tubac, Terrenate, Fronteras, Janos, San Buenaventura, Paso del Norte, Guajoquilla, Julimes, Cerro Gordo, San Saba, Monclova, and San Juan Bautista. Of these only three, Janos, San Juan Bautista, and Bahía del Espíritu Santo, were to remain unmoved.¹

From the outposts, Santa Fé and San Antonio de Béxar, respectively, Robledo, twenty leagues above El Paso, and Arroyo del Cibolo, between San Antonio de Béxar and Bahía del Espíritu Santo, were to be garrisoned.²

The force at San Antonio de Béxar was to be increased to the size recommended by Rubí, by bringing the requisite number of soldiers from Adaes and Orcoquisac; Santa Fé was likewise to have eighty soldiers, Bahía del Espíritu Santo fifty-one, and the rest of the *presidios* of the line forty-six each.³ The *presidio* of San Saba, instead of being extinguished, as Rubí had suggested, was to be removed to the banks of the Rio Grande, while those of Adaes and Orcoquisac, with their missions, were to be suppressed. The families at Adaes and Los Ais were to be brought to the vicinity of Béxar and given lands.

¹The map made by de la Fora (see page 74) was the one by which the king's advisers were guided in drawing up the "New Regulation" (Arrillaga, *Recopilacion*, IX, 172). For the location of most of these *presidios* before they were changed, see maps in Bancroft, *North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 251, 310, 377, 381.

²Reglamento é instruccion, title "Instruccion para la nueva colocacion de presidios," Sec. 1.

³At each of the other *presidios* there were to be kept ten Indian explorers, but as it was thought that there were no Indians near Bahía suitable for this purpose, that place was to have five additional soldiers (Reglamento é instruccion, Título Segundo, in Arrillaga, *Recopilacion*, IX, 142).

To secure a more uniform and efficient military service on the frontier, the order provided for a new general officer, the *inspector comandante* of the interior provinces of New Spain. He must be a person of at least the rank of colonel, and might not, while inspector, be a provincial governor or a presidial captain. He was put directly under orders from the viceroy, but in case a *comandante general* of the interior provinces should ever be appointed, he was to be directly subject to that officer. To aid him in the discharge of his duties two assistant inspectors were provided. These duties were primarily to keep the viceroy informed of presidial and military affairs, direct frontier campaigns, and supervise the *presidios* and presidial officers. Either he or his assistants must make an annual inspection of each of the *presidios* and report to the viceroy.

The office of *inspector comandante* was filled by the appointment of Dn. Hugo Oconor, who had recently served as governor of Texas *ad interim*. Of his career there Bonilla, author of the *Breve Compendio*, wrote, "Oconor attained the glorious distinction of leaving an immortal name in the province. He attested his valor, disinterested conduct, and military policy, he preserved peace in the land, and he made himself an object of fear to the savages, who know him by the name of el Capitan Colorado [the Red Captain]."¹ Oconor chose for his assistants Antonio Bonilla, just quoted, and Dn. Roque Medina.²

2. *Oconor's instructions to Ripperdá*.—The viceroy's instructions to Oconor for carrying the new policy into effect were issued March 10, 1773, and on May 6, Oconor, from camp at Nuestra Señora del Carmen, despatched to Baron de Ripperdá, then governor of Texas, orders for putting in force so much of the new plan as concerned his province.³ Immediately upon receiving the

¹*Breve Compendio*, 62.

²The *Breve Compendio* was written before Bonilla became Oconor's assistant.

³Ynstruccion Reservada que han de tener presente el Colonel de Cavalleria Baron de Ripperda Gobernador de la Prova. de texas para la practica en los dos Presidios de alla del nuevo Reglamto. qe, su Magd. se há servido expedir en Díez de Septre. del Año proximo pasado, y demas puntos que contiene, para el Govno. Política de dha. Provincia dispuesta por mi Dn. Hugo Oconor, Coronel de Infanteria Comandte. Ynspector de las Pro-

orders the governor was to go to the frontier and extinguish the two *presidios* and the four missions¹ condemned by Rubí, taking in charge the ornaments that had been given to the mission churches by the crown,² and removing to Béxar the garrisons, artillery, and munitions from the *presidios*, and whatever settlers might be found at any of the four places. The settlers were to be brought to the villa of San Fernando, given lands within the villa for building spots, and outside the villa for pasture and arable lands, and the privilege of making at their own expense an irrigating ditch from the San Antonio River.³ On returning to Béxar, he was to reorganize the garrison, choosing for the prescribed eighty men the best in all three of the companies at Adaes, Orcoquisac, and Béxar. Ripperdá was to remain captain, Cordova and Oranday, lieutenants of the garrisons of Orcoquisac and Béxar, were to be lieutenants of the reformed company, while the aged lieutenant of Adaes, José Gonzalez, a veteran of some forty years' service at the same place, was to be retired with other superannuated and useless soldiers. The company at Béxar having been reorganized, a detachment of twenty men was to be sent at once to Arroyo del Cibolo.⁴ The purpose of garrisoning this place was to protect a number of ranches in the neighborhood, and to cover the long distance between Béxar and Bahía del Espíritu Santo.⁵

III. REMOVAL OF THE SETTLERS FROM THE EASTERN FRONTIER, 1773.

1. *Ripperdá on the frontier.*—These instructions reached the hands of Ripperdá on May 18. He apparently did not favor the

vincias de este Reyno de Nueva España de Orden del Exmo. Sor. Fr. Dn. Antonio Maria Bucareli y Ursua, Virrey Governor, y Capitan General de ella (in Expediente sobre proposiciones, 79-90).

¹The official names of these missions were Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Nacogdoches, Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes, Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais, and Nuestra Señora de la Luz.

²The rest of the movables of the missions were to go to the College of Zacatecas, upon which the missions depended (Ynstruccion Reservada, Sec. 2).

³Ynstruccion Reservada, Secs. 5-9.

⁴*Ibid.*, Secs. 10-15.

⁵See note on Arroyo del Cibolo, page 87.

step about to be taken, as will be seen later on, but within a week, nevertheless, he set out for the frontier, going first to Adaes and returning by way of Nacogdoches.¹ It seems that the garrison of Orcoquisac was already at Béxar, and that, therefore, Ripperdá did not go to Orcoquisac.² As affairs at Béxar demanded his attention, he remained only eight days in the settlements, leaving the execution of his mission to Lieutenant Gonzalez, of the Adaes garrison.

At mission Nacogdoches, where a large concourse of Indians was assembled, the governor was visited by the head chief of the Téxas, Santo, or Vigotes, who had suspended hostilities with the Osages in order to entreat the Spaniards not to leave the frontier. Vigotes seem to have been moved to this solicitude in part by the fact that the Lipans were just then threatening hostilities.³ He undoubtedly knew, too, that the withdrawal of the Spaniards meant a decrease in the number of presents and in the available supply of firearms and other articles of trade.

Contrary to Rubí's prediction that Adaes was bringing to a close its unfortunate career, since his visit six years before the place seems to have prospered, at least in so far as numbers are a sign of prosperity; for whereas in 1767 Rubí was able to report only about thirty families—perhaps two hundred persons—Ripperdá estimated a population of more than five hundred, living near the *presidio* and on ranches round about Adaes and Los Ais.⁴ These

¹Ripperdá to the viceroy, May 28, 1773, and July 11, 1773, in Vol. 100, Provincias Internas, Archivo General.

²On his return from the frontier the governor mentioned finding Captain Pacheco, of the Orcoquisac garrison, at Béxar. A report made on Dec. 15, 1771, shows that at that time all of the garrison belonging to Orcoquisac, as well as fifty of the soldiers from Adaes, were in Béxar. Whether the Orcoquisac garrison had remained there all this time I can not say. Ripperdá may have gone to Adaes by way of Orcoquisac, which would account for the garrison reaching Béxar in advance of the governor (Ripperdá to the viceroy, Dec. 15, 1771, and July 11, 1773, in Vol. 100, Provincias Internas, Archivo General).

³Ripperdá to the viceroy, July 11, 1773 (Letter No. 30, Vol. 100, Provincias Internas, Archivo General).

⁴*Ibid.*

figures are fairly substantiated by other evidence.¹ The population was a mixture of Spanish, French, and Indians, and, perhaps, Negroes. Much of the recent growth seems to have been due to an influx, after Louisiana became a Spanish province, of French and half-breeds from Natchitoches, some of them Indian traders.

2. *Antonio Gil Ybarbo*.—The most prominent citizen of the vicinity was Antonio Gil Ybarbo, who becomes the central character of the remainder of this sketch. The few facts that we can gather of his previous career shed light upon conditions on the eastern frontier, and, viewed in connection with Ybarbo's subsequent influence, upon the attitude of the government towards these conditions. Ybarbo was a native of Adaes, and at the time when this story opens he was about forty-four years old.² By his enemies he was reputed to be a mulatto.³ Though his headquarters seem to have been at Adaes, he was the owner of and lived part of the time upon a large ranch, called El Lobanillo (the Mole or Wart), situated near the mission of Los Ais. The documents represent this ranch as "already a pueblo," and tell us that Ybarbo possessed there a large amount of stock. In addition to his ranching interests he was also a trader, having for several years maintained commercial relations, both at Adaes and El Lobanillo, with a wealthy French merchant, Nicolas de la Mathe, from Point Coupée,⁴ Louisiana.⁵

¹See page 89.

²According to a statement made by Ybarbo in 1792 he was then sixty-three years old. This would have made him about forty-four years old in 1773. See a census of Nacogdoches, dated at Béxar, Dec. 31, 1792, and signed by Ybarbo (Béxar Archives).

³This statement is based on the assertion of Juan Ugalde, *comandante general* of the Eastern Internal Provinces, who was hostile to Ybarbo, and who, at the time he made the assertion, was trying to secure Ybarbo's removal from office (Ugalde to the viceroy, Oct. 30, 1788, in *Consulta del Sr. Comandante Gral.*, etc., 9-11).

⁴The Spanish documents render this name Punta Cortada or Puente Cortada.

⁵Quaderno que Corresponde, 9; testimony of Fr. Josef Francisco Mariano de la Garza, Nov. 14, 1787 (Béxar Archives). Garza was for several years in charge of spiritual affairs at Bucareli and Nacogdoches, and he knew Ybarbo well. His testimony was that of a warm supporter of Ybarbo, and was, therefore, not intended to be damaging in any way. For more about Father Garza, see pages 113-115; and about La Mathe, page 108.

In view of the hostility of the Spanish government toward French trade among the Indians and of the chronic complaint about French smuggling on the border, Ybarbo's position might be regarded as a questionable one did we not have good reason to suspect that, in spite of a multitude of laws, such things were customarily winked at by the local officials and lightly regarded as a question of private morals. Once at least, however, Ybarbo's trading activities had got him into trouble. It was during the administration of Hugo Oconor, who, in some circles, had the unusual reputation of having entirely put an end to contraband trade in Texas.¹ This official tells us that at one time Ybarbo had been imprisoned several months, in handcuffs, for complicity in the sale at Natchitoches and New Orleans of various droves of mules and horses stolen by the Indians from San Saba, B́exar, and Bahía.² Just what form the complicity took is not stated.

Notwithstanding his questionable pursuits, he was prominent in the affairs of the locality, and was held in favor by Oconor's successor, the Baron de Ripperdá. Because of his prominence, he was intrusted by Governor Ripperdá, who had never seen him, with the administration of the funds for purchasing the presidial supplies, a responsibility which he is said to have discharged wisely and honestly.³ Other indications of his good standing with the governor and of his influence in the affairs of Texas will appear as the story proceeds.

3. *Consternation among the settlers.*—As soon as he had arrived at Adaes, Ripperdá had issued an order that within five days every one must be ready for the march to B́exar.⁴ To the inhabitants this meant no less than expatriation. The love of home is deeply rooted in the human breast—the more deeply the simpler the people. Many of these had been born and had spent all their lives in the place; some had personal ties across Arroyo Hondo in the French settlement or in the Indian villages; and some had smaller or larger material interests in ranches and in Indian trade. It can not, therefore, cause surprise that the governor's order

¹See Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz.

²Oconor to the viceroy, Dec. 31, 1775. Quaderno que Corresponde, 41.

³Testimony of Father Garza, Nov. 14, 1787 (B́exar Arheives).

⁴Ybarbo to Oconor, Jan. 8, 1774, in Quaderno que Corresponde, 6.

created a commotion. An extension of the time was asked and a few days were granted.¹ A number of persons, thirty-five according to the reports, refusing to be thus evicted, fled to the woods. Most of the inhabitants, however, prepared to obey the command, though apparently with bad grace in some cases, for complaint was made against Gonzalez that "when the day for leaving arrived he mounted a horse and went from house to house, driving the people from them."² This, no doubt, reflects the unwillingness of the people to leave rather than any harshness on the part of the old officer.

The sudden removal involved, of course, the abandonment of whatever permanent improvements the settlers had made, small in general though these doubtless were. The urgency of the order did not allow time for suitable preparation for the march. The people were without supplies sufficient for so long a journey. Their stock, of which they seem to have had considerable, was scattered, and much of it could not be collected. Corn was nearly ready for harvesting, but it had to be abandoned. Some things which could not be carried, including the gun carriages, some of the cannons, and the greater part of the ammunition, were buried within the *presidio*.³

4. *The journey to San Antonio de Béxar*.—On June 25, the day appointed, the weary three months' journey from Adaes to San Antonio de Béxar was begun. When the company reached Ybarbo's ranch at El Lobanillo, twenty-four persons dropped behind, some being too ill to travel, others staying to care for the sick. Several of these were of Ybarbo's family. His mother, sister, and

¹Ybarbo does not mention the request for or the granting of the extension of time in his complaints about the hardships of the Adaesans. But Ripperdá (letter to the viceroy, July 11, 1773) says that such a request was made and conceded, a statement that is borne out by other evidence. Ripperdá left Béxar for Adaes on May 25th. He says he was twelve days going, eight days there, and twelve days returning. He must have arrived in Adaes, therefore, on June 6th, and left on the 14th. His final order required that Adaes be abandoned on June 26th (Letter No. 30, Vol. 100, Provincias Internas, Archivo General).

²Ybarbo to Oconor, Jan. 8, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 6.

³Ripperdá to the viceroy, Sept. 28, 1773, in *Autos*, 21-22; Ybarbo to Oconor, Jan. 8, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 6.

sister-in-law were, it was represented, all unable to make the trip, and Ybarbo had secured from the governor a written permission to leave them, and with them his son and another family.¹ These facts, considered in connection with subsequent events, lead one to suspect that Ybarbo was not at this time intending to abandon his home for good and all. At mission Nacogdoches nine persons, comprising two families, dropped out, at the request, so the story goes, of the T       chief, Vigotes, who declared his intention of going to B       with his people to beg the governor to allow the Spaniards to return with a *padre*. At this place the aged Gonzalez and two women died. In Gonzalez's stead, the sergeant took charge of the march.

According to the reports, after leaving Nacogdoches the suffering of the emigrants was severe.² They were poorly supplied with beasts of burden, and many of them, women as well as men, had to go on foot till they reached the Brazos. In order to obtain food some were forced to sell not only their clothing, but even their rosaries and other sacred treasures. Owing to this scarcity of food, the drought experienced during the first half of the way, and the heavy floods encountered on the latter portion, there was much sickness among both people and animals, as a result of which ten children died, and some of the cattle were lost. At the Brazos, however, the party was met by supplies and mules sent out by the governor, and the suffering was relieved. At Arroyo del C      , where, in pursuance of the royal order, a garrison of twenty men had just been stationed by the governor,³ a few more persons

¹Ybarbo to Oconor, Jan. 8, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 7.

²Gonzales died on July 30th, hence more than a month was consumed in getting past Nacogdoches. This does not indicate any great haste (*Autos*, 22).

³Arroyo del C       was doubtless identical with modern C       Creek, which joins the San Antonio River about half way between San Antonio and Goliad, or old Bah     del Esp       Santo. According to Governor Ripperd  , the settlement on this *arroyo* was located "at the crossing of the Texas and the Tuacanes" (Ripperd   to the viceroy, Nov. 25, 1773. Letter No. 52, Vol. 100, *Provincias Internas*, *Archivo General*). According to a representation made by the government of the villa of San Fernando to Croix, Jan. 12, 1778 (*Los Vecinos*, etc., 10) it was about eighteen leagues eastward from San Antonio de B      . In 1782 the *ranchos* here were six in number, with a population of 85. Some twenty-five *ranchos*

dropped out of the company. Finally, on Sept. 26, the residue straggled into Béxar, foot-sore, and so broken in health that within some three months more than thirty others died. With the party had come the four missionaries¹ from Adaes, Los Ais, and Nacogdoches. The soldiers brought with them, drawn by the oxen of the settlers, twelve four-pound cannons, fifteen boxes of ammunition and eight *tercios* of gun-carriage iron.²

5. *The aftermath.*—No sooner had the Spaniards left Ádaes than the neighboring Indians raided the place, scattered things about, and unearthed and carried away part of the ammunition and other effects buried within the *presidio*.³ But the Indians did not get all the spoils, for the families left at El Lobanillo appeared upon the scene and saved what they could.⁴ The runaways from Adaes shortly transferred their headquarter to El Lobanillo. On September 13, Pellier, in command at Natchitoches, wrote to Ripperdá that "many fugitives who escaped from the convoy from los Adaes have taken refuge at Lobanillo. They come surreptitiously to my post in search of liquor (*aguardiente*) with the purpose of introducing it into the tribes."⁵ With the Spanish garrison removed, the French apparently flocked in to trade and live among the Indians in greater numbers than before.⁶

had been abandoned (see Baneroft, *North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 632). For additional information concerning this settlement, see Los Vecinos, etc., *passim*.

¹According to Rubí (see ante, p. 75) there had been five in 1767.

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, Sept. 28, 1773; petition of Ybarbo and others to the governor, Oct. 4, 1773—both in Autos, 21-22, 4. Ybarbo to Oconor, Jan. 8, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 7.

Four of the cannons brought to Béxar were ordered sent to Monclova (the viceroy to Ripperdá, Feb. 9, 1774, in Vol. 99, *Provincias Internas*).

³Testimony of a Spaniard who returned to Adaes for a sick man who had been left behind (Ripperdá to the viceroy, Sept. 28, 1773, in Autos, 21-22).

⁴Oconor to Ripperdá, Feb. 17, 1774, reviewing a letter which he had received from Ripperdá.

⁵Volume 100, *Provincias Internas*. The original letter is in French. It is accompanied by a translation into Spanish.

⁶Ybarbo, in writing to Oconor, Jan. 8, 1774, said: "Scarcely had we left when Frenchmen settled in all the nations. This report we got

So far as I have been able to ascertain, some of these people never left El Lobanillo, although orders were given to remove them, and Ybarbo did remove some of them. Thus it is possible, and even probable, that in spite of government commands the frontier was never wholly abandoned.

IV. THE ATTEMPT TO SETTLE AT LOS AIS.

1. *The petition of the Adaesans.*—As soon as the Adaesans arrived at Béxar, Ripperdá, in accordance with his instructions, promulgated among them an order to choose anywhere within the villa of San Fernando such lands as they desired for their building spots, fields, and pastures, providing that by the choice they should not interfere with the rights of settlers or of the Indians at the missions. Thinking that the families who had stopped at Arroyo del Cibolo could do no better than to settle there, he sent a lieutenant to that place to lay out lands for them in case they chose to remain there.¹

But the Adaesans, both those at Arroyo del Cibolo and those at Béxar, promptly refused to choose lands or to accept them, for they wished to return to the eastern frontier;² and eight days after arriving, they presented to the governor a petition to that effect, signed by seventy-five men.³ It stated that the lo-

from a Spaniard who remained behind sick, as well as from one of the French traders who came with some Indians and reported the fact" (Quaderno que Corresponde, 8).

¹Ripperdá to the viceroy, Sept. 28, and Dec. 10, 1773, in Autos, 8, 21; Ybarbo to Oconor, Jan. 8, 1774, in Quaderno que Corresponde, 8.

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, Sept. 28, 1773, in Autos, 21.

³Only seventy-five names appear on the copy of the petition in my possession, but Ripperdá says there were seventy-six (Reply to the petitioners, in Autos, 5). It may be that the original petition contained seventy-six. Ripperdá stated that the families of these petitioners included 126 persons, which would make 202 individuals represented by the petition. In a letter of Dec. 11, 1773, the governor says the petition represented the majority of the Adaesans. If this be true, his estimate of the number of persons on the frontiers (see page 83) was too large, even if he meant to include the soldiers who were there. According to Lieutenant Pacheco there were in Béxar in April, 1774, 140 men from Adaes capable of bearing arms (Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 13).

cality at San Fernando offered little or no opportunity to form a settlement without encroaching upon the rights of others;¹ that, because of the loss of all their property through the removal from the frontier, the petitioners were bankrupt and could not make the proposed aqueduct; that they wished permission to form a new pueblo at the old mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais, where, because of its nearness to Adaes, they might be able to recover some of the goods they had left scattered at their former homes; and that they hoped that, because of their known loyalty, their sufferings on the way from Adaes, and their present need, their prayer would be granted. In this event they agreed to bear, themselves, all the expense of the return, except for the support of a chaplain, whom they wished provided at government expense for ten years.²

There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of these petitioners so far as their request to be allowed to return to the frontier is concerned. But the claim that there was no room for them at Béxar was absurd, while the choice of the particular location asked for is suggestive of the part played by Gil Ybarbo in the matter. Mission Los Ais was close by his ranch, El Lobanillo. He was the person who had the most to lose by being driven from the frontier. He was the most influential man among them, acting as spokesman for the rest, and, naturally enough, his interests were not forgotten in the choice of a site for a new settlement. At El Lobanillo he had left his family; here he hoped to recover his lost stock and other property: here he had a ranch well established; and it may be supposed that, as was afterwards charged, he was loath to abandon the interests he had developed in contraband trade. Other persons who signed the petition were, no doubt, for similar reasons genuinely anxious to return, but the impression remains, nevertheless, that, although he represented the sincere wishes of his neighbors, Ybarbo was the moving spirit in the attempt to undo the policy of the government.

2. *Ripperdá favors the petition.*—The petitioners probably ex-

¹In a letter to Oconor, Ybarbo said that the country from the Béxar to the Guadalupe was "overrun (*infestado*) with stock, missions, and men" (Quaderno que Corresponde, 7).

²Petition of Gil Ybarbo and others, Oct. 4, 1773, in Autos, 1-5.

pected support from Ripperdá,—indeed he may have encouraged them to present their request,—for it was known that withdrawal from the frontier was not in accord with his desires. Ever since he had become governor he had taken, under the influence of Captain Atanacio de Mezières y Clugnes, of Natchitoches, a definite position regarding relations with the northeastern tribes. Of first importance was to keep them under Spanish influence so that they not only would remain friendly themselves, but also might be used against the enemies of the Spaniards, particularly the Apaches and the Comanches. This was the key-note of his dealings with the northeastern Indians, and it seems to have been a foremost consideration in his relations with Ybarbo.

Through the aid of Mezières and Father Ramirez, president of the Texas missions, Ripperdá had in 1771 and 1772 ratified treaties of friendship with several of the northernmost tribes,¹ who had formerly been considered as enemies, and, at Mezières's suggestion, he had advocated enlisting these new friends in a campaign against the Apaches.² He maintained, moreover, that they could not be kept friendly unless, like the French, the Spaniards would supply them with fire-arms and ammunition. Otherwise, he said, they would prefer war to peace, for the sake of an excuse for engaging in their favorite pastime of stealing horses from the Spaniards and selling them to the French. As an additional means of cementing their friendship he recommended establishing among them a new *presidio*, with a colony of citizens and a mission near it.

With foreign enemies as well as the Indians in view, he advocated extending a line of *presidios* clear from New Mexico to the

¹The principal ones of these were the Quitseis (Keechis), west or a little northwest of Nacogdoches; the Yscanis, a short distance west of the Quitseis; the Tawakanas on the Trinity and the Brazos rivers west of the Yscanis; the Tonkawas, who lived a wandering life between the middle courses of the Brazos and the Trinity; the Xaranames, apostates from the mission at Bahía, now living among or near the Tawakanas; the Ovedsitas (Wichitas?), living on the Salt Fork of the Brazos; and the Taovayases (Towash?), living northeast of the Ovedsitas on the Red River west of one of the Cross Timbers (Mezières, Informe, *passim*).

²Mezières to Ripperdá, July 4, 1772, in Expediente sobre proposiciones, 24-61. Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*, 66.

Mississippi.¹ A new argument for more strongly defending the eastern frontier was now available and was made use of by Ripperdá to support this proposal. It was not long after the cession of the country east of the Mississippi to the English before there began to be talk of danger from that quarter, much as formerly there has been talk of danger from the French. Rubí had said he did not entertain any such fears² although others did. Later on, rumors floated in from the north that gave some ground for such apprehensions. Mezières claimed that when he was on his extended tour among the northern Indians in 1772, carrying to them the sword and the olive branch, he found among the Taovayas a certain Indian, named José, who was engaged in bringing from the Pams-Mahas (Pawnees?) firearms of foreign—that is, neither French nor Spanish—make. He found there also two Panis-Mahas advertising the advantages of trading with the English. These he brought to Béxar to be questioned on the subject.³ In addition to these things, Mezières declared the Osage Indians to be hostile to the Spaniards and friendly toward the English.⁴

Mezières's report convinced Ripperdá that, to keep them from contamination, the Taovayas and Ovedsitas should be brought from their remote homes on the upper Brazos and the upper Red rivers to the interior, and the new *presidio* established among them; and he saw in the situation of the Osages and the threatened English trade an additional argument for keeping an influence over all the northern Indians, namely, that they might be used eventually in driving the Osages and their allies across the Missouri River, or even in repelling an invasion by the English themselves.

The eastern tribes, living between Adaes and the middle Trinity were generally friendly toward the Spaniards, but recently suspicion had arisen that the Vidais and the Tέxas were becoming

¹Ripperdá to the viceroy, April 28, 1772, and July 5, 1772, in Expediente sobre proposiciones, 2-3, 19-20; Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*, 65-66. Ripperdá had earlier than this expressed similar opinions. See the *informe* of Barrios to the viceroy, Nov. 6, 1771, in Vol. 99, Provincias Internas, Archivo General.

²Dictamen, paragraph 17.

³Informe del Capn. infanta. Dn. Athanacio de Mezières al Sr. Coronel Baron de Ripperdá, July 4, 1772, in Expediente sobre proposiciones, 37-39.

⁴*Ibid.*

too friendly toward the Apaches, the worst enemy of the Spaniards. Ripperdá, therefore, favored establishing a closer surveillance over these tribes.¹

It is not surprising, therefore, that the governor, entertaining for the frontier such plans as these, should use his influence in behalf of the Adaesans, whose wish accorded so well with his. He replied to the petitioners that he could not grant their request without the infraction of a royal command,—that is, the king's order of 1772,—but that he sympathized with their cause, and that if they could not find suitable lands at San Fernando, at Arroyo del Cibolo, or in any of the old ranches in the neighborhood, they might carry their petition to the viceroy.²

3. *Ybarbo and Flores sent to Mexico.*—After some delay, during which an attempt may have been made to find lands to their liking, although this is doubtful, the Adaesans acted upon the governor's suggestion. On December 10, Ybarbo and Gil Flores, the two most prominent of their number,³ were formally made the authorized agents of the citizens to carry the petition to the viceroy.⁴ When they left Béxar they carried with them letters from the governor to the viceroy and Hugo Oconor. To prove the need of a minister on the frontier they carried a certificate taken from the records just brought to Béxar of the number of baptisms performed at the missions at Adaes and at Nacogdoches during their existence. This statement could hardly be considered the most convincing evidence, for it showed that in over half a century the aggregate number of baptisms at the two missions had been only three hundred and forty.⁵

In these letters to the viceroy and the inspector general, Rip-

¹Expediente sobre proposiciones, 1-3, 11-17; Ripperdá to the viceroy, July 5, 1775, in Expediente sobre proposiciones, 19-21.

²Autos, 5.

³"We who have most to lose" (Petition of Ybarbo and Flores, May 10, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 30.

⁴The certificate of authority is signed by fifty-two persons (Autos, 6). The agents were elected by majority vote (Los Vecinos, etc., 7.)

⁵The report for the mission at Nacogdoches extended from June 24, 1717, to April 17, 1768, and for that at Los Adaes from August 6, 1716, to Feb. 12, 1773 (Autos, 17, 18).

perdá made it clear that an adverse royal order had not served to change his mind with respect to the frontier. On the contrary, he restated his views with emphasis.

He said that he was not fully informed of the reason for having abandoned East Texas, but that he believed it would be advantageous to Béxar and the other interior settlements to establish Spaniards among the northern Indians, particularly the Tawakanas and Taovayases,¹ the northernmost and at the same time the most numerous and powerful of all the nations in the province. Since these tribes were new friends, such settlements would, he thought, be valuable as serving to cement and retain their alliance. By forming a militia of the settlers, a line of defence would be established from Béxar to Natchitoches. The only objection to such a plan that he could see would be the encouragement that might be given by the presence of the settlers to trade with the French at Natchitoches. But that, he said, was going on briskly even now, not only with the Taovayases and Tawakanas and other tribes hitherto supplied from Louisiana, but also with those supposedly supplied from the interior of Texas, as was proved by the fact that these Indians were so well provided with goods that when they came to Béxar they even had guns to sell to the Spaniards. He thought, moreover, that an attempt to close the trade with Natchitoches might have even worse results, in driving the Indians to trade with the English, which they could easily do. These considerations induced him, he said, to recommend the petition carried by Ybarbo and Flores as one worthy of careful consideration. In his letter to Oconor Ripperdá referred to a private request which Ybarbo had to make, and bespoke for him Oconor's assistance, so that in case the main petition should not be granted, "ultimately his ranch, El Lobanillo, might come to form a pueblo of more than sixty persons." From this it seems probable that at this time Ybarbo intended to ask permission to return to his ranch without the remainder of the petitioners, to collect and form a settlement of the persons left on the frontier, who numbered some sixty or more.²

¹After bringing the latter to the interior, he probably meant.

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, Dec. 10, 1773 (Autos, 8) and to Oconor, Dec. 11, 1773 (Quaderno que Corresponde, 10-11).

It will be seen further on that the private request actually made of the viceroy was slightly different in form from what Ripperdá apparently understood it to be, although it was not essentially different in effect.

The commissioners left for Mexico some time in December or early in January. On the 8th of January they were at Santa Rosa María. From this place Ybarbo dispatched a letter to Oconor, who was at Chihuahua.¹ In it he set forth in great detail the hardship incident to the eviction from Adaes and the sad plight of the exiles at Béxar. He said that more than thirty of his compatriots had died at Béxar previous to his leaving, and only God knew how many since; that subsequent to arriving there some of the families had been forced to go about the *presidio* and missions begging and some had even been forced to steal, in consequence of which trouble had arisen with the citizens; and that within two days after reaching Béxar the Indians had carried off the few animals they had brought. In conclusion, he said that he thought a settlement ought to be established on the frontier to keep out the French who were flocking in, and asked Oconor to support his demands.

4. *The petition granted.*—Having arrived in Mexico, the agents presented their petition, together with an address, on the 28th of February. The readiness with which the government now proceeded to reverse a definite policy of the king is, to say the least, surprising. In his action in the matter the viceroy was guided almost entirely by the advice of Areche, the fiscal, who, in his turn, was dependent upon conflicting reports from Béxar, Bahía, and Chihuahua. This official, to whom the petition and Ripperdá's letter were referred,² reported³ that in his opinion the proposal to establish a settlement at Los Ais was commendable, as a means of checking Indian assaults; that the king's reason for extinguishing the mission at Los Ais had been that it was without Indians and useless; and that the viceroy would do well to grant the request and

¹The letter was sent by Roque Medina, assistant inspector (Quaderno que Corresponde, 16).

²On Feb. 28th.

³On March 7th.

to order the governor to put the measure into effect.¹ He does not seem to have been impressed with the argument predicated upon danger from the English, for he did not refer to it in his report. He advised proceeding through the governor on the ground that Oconor's many duties and his distance from Texas would entail delay.²

The matter next went before a *junta de guerra y hacienda* called by the viceroy for the purpose. This body resolved that, in view of the situation of the Adaesans, and, more particularly, of the advantage that would, according to the governor, result from a settlement on the eastern frontier, the petition should be granted; that the Adaesans should be settled in Los Ais in conformity with the laws for the settlement of new pueblos and *lugares*,³ that the viceroy should instruct the president of the Texas missions to appoint a minister for the proposed settlement, provide through the *sinodo* for his equipment and maintenance, and make plans for bringing near the new pueblo as many of the surrounding tribes as possible, as a means of keeping them quiet and of preventing their communication with the English and other foreigners. This decision of the *junta* the viceroy ordered carried out.⁴

5. *Oconor interferences.*—Thus far Ybarbo's mission had prospered without a hitch. But a communication received by the viceroy suddenly changed the situation. In reply to Ripperdá's letter of Dec. 11 Oconor had written saying that he could not support Ybarbo's petition, and ordering the governor to bring to Béxar the people and the ammunition left on the frontier.⁵ To the viceroy he wrote in terms of strongest disapproval of the whole plan. He said that he was convinced that private interest, ignorance, mistaken piety, and malice had combined to defeat royal plans favorable to peace. Citing Rubí's report as authority, he maintained that Adaes had long been the seat of contraband trade in

¹Autos, 13.

²*Ibid.*, 13-14.

³See *Recopilacion de Leyes de las Indias*, Lib. IV. Titulo VII.

⁴The *junta* was held March 17th, and on March 23d the viceroy gave the order to put its resolution into effect (*Quaderno que Corresponde*, 12-13).

⁵Oconor to Ripperdá, Feb. 17, 1774, in Autos, 19-20.

fire-arms and ammunition carried on among the northern Indians in spite of numerous royal orders, and that the reason why Gil Ybarbo and his co-petitioners wished to return to Los Ais was to engage in this illicit trade. Referring to an Indian who had accompanied Ybarbo and Flores to Mexico, he said that it was sad indeed that in addition to supporting so preposterous a petition, diametrically opposed to a royal order, Ripperdá should give to northern Indians a passport clear to the capital, thus enabling them to learn the routes into Coahuila and the state of its defences. Finally, he requested that Ripperdá should be required to carry out his previous orders with respect to the Adaesans, and to put a stop to contraband trade in Texas carried on from Natchitoches.¹

Just when this letter reached the viceroy does not appear, but four days after the *junta* had granted Ybarbo's petition it was referred to Areche.² A week later he advised that the recent action be rescinded, and that a new *junta* be called to reconsider the matter in the light of Oconor's letter and the reports of Rubí and Rivera, to which Oconor had referred. This plan was adopted, and on May 5 the new *junta* decided to refer the matter, with full testimony, to Oconor, with authority to grant or refuse the request, as he thought best.³ What his decision would be could hardly have been doubtful in the light of his previous expressions relative to the subject.

6. *The matter temporarily referred to Ripperdá.*—Upon learning of the decision of the *junta*, Ybarbo and Flores decided to present the private petition to which Ripperdá had referred,⁴ and to return to Texas without waiting for the settlement of their main business. Accordingly, on May 10, they asked permission to remove their families temporarily to Natchitoches, as a base of operations from which to recover their abandoned property.⁵ This

¹Oconor to the viceroy, Feb. 21, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 14-17.

²March 21.

³Areche to the viceroy, March 28, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 17-18; decision of the *junta*, *Ibid.*, 28-29.

⁴See page 94.

⁵To enable them to make the journey home, they asked for financial aid from the government, which was granted them in the form of a loan. During their stay in Mexico the government had supplied them each with a stipend of two *reals* a day (*Quaderno que Corresponde*, 30-32).

request was refused, and on the same day that he referred the decision to Oconor the viceroy instructed Ripperdá that he must not permit Ybarbo and Flores to go to Natchitoches under any consideration. But the force of this prohibition was greatly weakened by adding to it the very elastic instruction that he should give Ybarbo and Flores aid in locating the Adaesans "in a suitable place."¹ It seems that the viceroy verbally told Ybarbo that the new settlement must be one hundred leagues from Natchitoches, meaning, doubtless, that it should be no nearer than this.²

Thus on one and the same day the viceroy had left the matter in the hands of two different persons whose policies were at variance. While Bucareli doubtless intended Ripperdá to make only a temporary arrangement pending Oconor's decision, this vacillating and double policy left open the way for misunderstanding and for the eventual defeat of the royal plans, a result which was fostered also by Oconor's preoccupation and his procrastination. After a lapse of six weeks Oconor asked to be relieved from the responsibility imposed upon him, on the ground that it was an affair of Ripperdá's, and that he was too far away and too busy to perform the duty. The viceroy insisted, however, but long before Oconor was ready to turn his attention to the affair, Ripperdá had made arrangements difficult to set aside.³ When Oconor took the matter up with Ripperdá, the latter replied that he had already established the Adacsans in a settlement. Apparently in ignorance of the viceroy's order of May 17 to Ripperdá, Oconor now reprimanded the governor for exceeding his authority, since the decision had been left to himself. To this the governor naturally replied that he had acted according to the viceroy's orders, and this information Oconor chose to consider an excuse for another year's inaction.

¹"Donde corresponde, segun lo que está prevenido" (The viceroy to Ripperdá, May 17, 1774, in the Béxar Archives). See also Oconor to the viceroy, Dec. 31, 1775, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 42.

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, Sept. 10, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 34.

³Oconor to the viceroy, July 5, 1775, and Dec. 31, 1775; the viceroy to Oconor, August 30, 1775; Oconor to Ripperdá, Nov. 20, 1775; and Ripperdá to Oconor, Feb. 5, 1775—all in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 40-54.

V. THE SETTLEMENT AT PILAR DE BUCARELI, 1774-1779.¹

1. *The selection of a site for the Adaesans.*—The location of the Adaesans was thus left temporarily, until Oconor should interfere, to Ripperdá, with only the restriction that the place chosen must be at least one hundred leagues from Natchitoches. In the performance of this commission he again showed his sympathy with the desires of Ybarbo and his opposition to the royal policy by sending the Adaesans to a place as far from Béxar and as near to the northeastern frontier as the terms of his authority would allow.

The site designated by him was on the right bank of the Trinity River, at Paso Tomás, which was apparently at the crossing of the Old San Antonio Road and the La Bahía Road over that stream. This opinion as to the location of Paso Tomás is based upon the following data: Ripperdá said that it was the place where "the lower Adaes road," or, as he otherwise described it, "the road leading [from Béxar] to . . . Adaes and Oreoquisac" crossed the Trinity.² We are told, too, that it was above Oreoquisac,³ and considerably nearer to Nacogdoches than to the coast, the distances to these places being roughly in the proportion of two to three.⁴ It must, therefore, if this be true, have been at least as far up the river as the upper portion of Walker County. It was, moreover, at a point in a pretty direct line be-

¹The fullest printed account of this settlement, so far as I know, is the one by Bancroft (*North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 630), which occupies only a page, and that marred by errors and half truths.

²Ripperdá (writing from Béxar) to the viceroy, September 1, 1774, and November 15, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 34-36.

³Ybarbo, in describing a trip made by him to the coast in 1777, said that he went through Oreoquisac. See a summary of his report in a letter from Ripperdá to Croix, August 30, 1777, in *Expediente sobre*, . . . Parroco, 13-19.

⁴Ripperdá said that Paso Tomás was "three regular days [march] from the coast" (Letter to the viceroy, November 15, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 36). Ybarbo reported that it was only a two days' march from the Texas village at Nacogdoches (Letter to Croix, May 13, 1779).

tween Nacogdoches and Béxar,¹ and could not, therefore, have been very far from the Old San Antonio Road which, it has usually been supposed, passed very directly between these places. It was, finally, in the Vidais country, their main village being within two leagues.² The location of this tribe in the later Spanish period of Texas history is marked in modern geography by Bidais Creek, which flows into the Trinity River between Walker and Madison counties.

These data, taken all together, make it seem probable, as has been said, that Paso Tomás was at the crossing of the Old San Antonio Road and the La Bahía Road over the Trinity. The La Bahía Road could with propriety have been referred to as the lower Adaes road, and at the same time as the road leading from Béxar to Adaes and Orcoquisac. Moreover, according to most of the old maps, the Old San Antonio Road and the La Bahía Road crossed the Trinity together at a point above the mouth of Bidais Creek.³ This place has in modern times been identified with the crossing known as Robbins's Ferry, at the old village of Randolph, in Madison County.

2. *The reasons assigned for the selection.*—The reasons given

¹Francisco Xavier Frago, in company with Pedro Vial, made, in 1788, a careful survey of the distances from Santa Fé to Natchitoches, from Natchitoches to Béxar, and from Béxar to Santa Fé. As he had been sent out expressly to survey these routes, we should be able to place dependence upon what he says about directions and distances. According to his diary practically no change was made from a southwesterly direction in passing from Nacogdoches to Béxar. He was on one of the well known routes across Texas, which was in all likelihood the Old San Antonio Road. On the way between these two places he passed through the abandoned site of Bucareli, as the settlement made at Paso Tomás was called (Fragosa, "Derrotero, Diario, y Calculacion de Leguas," etc. See bibliographical note, page 69.)

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, November 15, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 36, and to Croix, April 27, 1777, in *Documentos para la Historia . . . de Texas*, XXVIII, 224.

³See Austin's map, made in 1835, in Bancroft, *North Mexican States and Texas*, II, 75; another map made in 1835, given in Wooten, *A Comprehensive History of Texas*, I, 784; E. E. Lee's map of Texas, made in 1836, in McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, V, 12; John Arrowsmith's map, made in 1840, in Kennedy, *Texas*, I (2d ed., 1841).

by Ripperdá in his correspondence, either directly or by implication, for the selection of this site, were, briefly stated, (1) that Paso Tomás was on the highway from Béxar to Natchitoches, somewhere near midway, and that a settlement there would facilitate communication between the two places; (2) that it was sheltered from the Comanches through having between it and this dread foe the friendly Tawakanas and Tonkawas; (3) that it was in an agricultural region of extreme richness, which might be expected later on to provide the *presidios* of Béxar and Bahía with horses and certain other products that then came from outside; (4) that it would be a good place from which to watch and cut off French contraband trade; (5) that it lay in the midst of a number of friendly Indian tribes, some to the north and some to the south, which fact gave it special advantages as a base of operations for keeping them amicable and for doing missionary work among them; (6) and finally, that it was a vantage point from which to guard the Gulf coast from the inroads of the English,¹ who were now beginning to be feared in that direction as well as toward the northeast.

The last two reasons were the ones most emphasized by the governor. His desire to establish and maintain an influence over the northeastern tribes has already been set forth. His emphasis of danger from the English may be accounted for by the fact that rumors of English traders on the Gulf coast were becoming numerous. An example of these rumors may be of interest. In the fall of 1772 it was reported that Englishmen were in the neighborhood of the mouth of the Trinity cutting wood for houses and giving presents to the Indians. Captain Cazorla, commander of the garrison at Bahía, was sent out to investigate the ground for such a tale. He spent about a month on the expedition, and heard in

¹See letters of Ripperdá to the viceroy, September 1, and November 15, 1774, and January 15, 1776, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 34-36, 68-70; Ripperdá to Croix, October 28, 1777, in *Representacion del Justicia*, 3. When Mezières visited Bucareli in 1778 he gave essentially the above reasons why the place should be fostered, adding the argument that the Trinity would offer a good outlet to New Orleans for the abundant products sure to be raised in the new settlement. This argument was based on the assumption that trade between Texas and Louisiana would be allowed. Mezières to Croix, March 18, 1778, in *Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establecer Comercio con los Yndios Gentiles*, 2.

the neighborhood of the Trinity reports of English traders, and found what he thought to be English guns. The Indians at a *ranchería* above Orcoquisac, reputed to be a center for French trade, told him that some Frenchmen living across the Neches in Louisiana were procuring these guns from Englishmen and bringing them to the Trinity, but that the French would not allow the English traders to come to the Indian villages in person.¹ Other reports of this kind were not lacking, and taken all together they may have caused the governor genuine uneasiness. He hoped, perhaps, in a settlement of the Adaesans on the Trinity, for a partial restoration of the coast protection that had recently been withdrawn by the removal of the garrison from Orcoquisac.² That this was a genuine consideration with Ripperdá is borne out by Ybarbo's activities on the coast, under the governor's direction, after settling on the Trinity. But the fact that Paso Tomás, in the midst of a large number of northeastern tribes, was chosen instead of a point near the coast, is a good indication that Ripperdá's desire to maintain an influence among these northeastern tribes and Ybarbo's desire to return to the neighborhood which he had left, together outweighed Ripperdá's fear of the English from the south.

The above reasons given by Ripperdá for the choice of Paso Tomás as the site for the new settlement all sound unselfish and patriotic enough. Other persons thought, however, that the selection was determined by the governor's and Ybarbo's personal interest in the forbidden Indian trade. Ripperdá had for some time been suspected of encouraging, if not of direct complicity with,

¹Diary of Luis Cazorla, in Expediente sobre proposiciones, 71-72. At this *ranchería* Cazorla was told that when an Englishman had come there to trade, "giving four balls for a deer skin," French soldiers from Natchitoches had arrested him and taken him to their post (*Ibid*). For a report of the finding, in 1778, of remains of foreign vessels on the coast, see Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establacer Comercio, 3. For another report of English on the coast, see below, page 118, and Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 165-7.

²The place which I have designated as the probable site of Paso Tomás corresponds very closely with the one indicated by Bancroft (*North Mexican States and Texas*, 1, 612) as the site of San Augustin de Ahumada before the removals which finally placed it at Orcoquisac.

French smuggling.¹ He was well known to favor its continuance rather than leave the Indians unsupplied with what they desired or to run the risk of having it furnished by the English, for he had distinctly said so.² In spite of numerous orders from the viceroy and repeated promises from Ripperdá that the French traders should be driven from the province,³ it was patent that they still frequented or lived among most of the tribes of East Texas. Their presence there is proved by evidence from all sources—the testimony of the *padres*, of Cazorla, Oconor, Medina, Ybarbo, Mezières, and of the governor himself. Though the viceroy's orders that they should be expelled were answered with promises of compliance, local protests Ripperdá met, if not with threats, with the opinion that it was not time to stop the trade.⁴ Suspicion of Ripperdá was increased, by the fact that his principal representative among the Indians, Mezières, had the reputation of being a veteran Indian trader,¹ while the most prominent of the French

¹Father Josef Abad, missionary at Bahía, who went with Mezières in 1771 to make the treaties with the northern Indians, in reporting the "scandalous trade" that he witnessed on the frontier, said, "I thought (I do not know for certain) that the governor was implicated in the trade, through his communication with de Mecieres" (Report to the viceroy, July 15, 1774, in Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 149-150).

²See pp. 91-92.

³In communications dated December 9 and December 19, 1772, and January 6, March 5, May 25, and June 30, 1773, the viceroy issued orders to the governor to cut off this trade. Ripperdá as frequently promised that the commands should be complied with (See a letter from the viceroy to Ripperdá, April 23, 1774, in Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 138. Some of these orders are in Doc. 1, Vol. LI, Sección de Historia, Archivo General).

⁴When Father Abad, in 1771, asked permission to go to the governor of Louisiana to report the contraband trade that he had seen, Ripperdá replied, according to Abad, that "an immediate prevention of the trade would be undesirable" (Abad to the viceroy, July 15, 1774, in Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 149-150). Cazorla complained that any one who remonstrated with Ripperdá about the contraband trade was threatened with arrest. See also the charge made by Medina, below, p. 104.

⁵Father Abad said that it was "notorious" that Mezières was one of the principal promoters of the French trade with the Indians (Letter to the viceroy, July 15, 1774, in Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 150). Raphael Pacheco, lieutenant at Béxar, wrote on April 20, 1774,

merchants, Nicolas de la Mathe, stood in high favor with the governor.

Ripperdá was charged even with sheltering contraband traders in Béxar. Don Roque Medina, one of Oconor's assistant inspectors, who was in that place early in 1774 inquiring into Ripperdá's administration, reported that some Frenchmen were there under various pretexts, but apparently engaged in trade. "These," he added, "are not the only ones who have come to the interior of this province with the Indians. There have been various others, who have stopped at the house of the governor and then returned to the northern nations, serving as couriers to fetch and carry letters [to and] from Natchitoches.

"The French continue to trade in guns, powder, and balls, which they exchange for . . . beasts of burden. They do not raise horses and mules, hence, in order to supply the need, it is necessary to obtain them from the Indians in trade. To supply these it is the custom for the Indians to come and rob our lands, as in fact they are now doing. Indeed they have no other occupation. They never enter this *presidio* as friends, without carrying off horses and mules when they depart, and there is no human being who can control this governor, or make him believe that they [the thieves] are the northern tribes. Any one who says so is imprisoned. Only a serious measure can remedy this situation."¹ Medina no doubt got his information in part from the citizens of Béxar, who as a rule were just then hostile to Ripperdá, but his statement is a good sample of the general feeling in regard to the governor's relations with the French and the northern Indians.² Ripperdá maintained, of course, that all these charges were gross calumnies; but

that Mezières was a person "who had always lived among the said nations, since the time of Dn. Jacinto de Barrios, trading in guns and ammunition" (*Ibid.*, 133).

¹Oconor to the viceroy, May 13, 1774, in Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 141; Medina to Oconor, March 8, 1774, *Ibid.*, 129.

²Upon receiving Medina's report through Oconor, the viceroy severely reprimanded Ripperdá for not having put a stop to the French trade and for being deceived by the Indians of the north, and forbade him henceforth to allow a single Frenchman in Texas or even to communicate with Mezières (The viceroy to Ripperdá, May 8, 1774).

the case against him, taking into consideration the great accumulation of testimony, seems to be a strong one.¹

Added to these grounds for distrust were Ybarbo's previous record on the frontier and the fact that the Vidais Indians, who lived near Paso Tomás, were the chief intermediaries between the French and the Apaches in the trade in fire-arms.² It is not surprising, therefore, that evil motives were attributed to Ripperdá and Ybarbo in the selection of a site for the Adaesans.

As soon as Oconor gave the governor's choice any attention, he reported what he knew of Ybarbo's previous career and of smuggling at Adaes before its abandonment, and proceeded to say that the Adaesans had been located by Ripperdá in "the place which better than any other enables them to engage in illicit trade and to encourage the northern Indians in stealing droves of horses from the *presidios* of San Antonio de Bèjar, Bahía del Espíritu Santo, and even as far as Laredo, as lately has been done. Moreover, the Trinity River facilitates navigation to the Opelusas and the neighborhood of New Orleans itself. Hence, it is concluded that the citizens established on the Trinity have better facilities than formerly for their contraband trade."³ That Cazorla and others made similar charges will appear later.

In concluding this subject one comment may be made. For Ripperdá to have been tolerant with French traders would have been quite consistent with his desire to keep on good terms with the Indians, to say nothing of any desire for private gain, considering, on the one hand, the great influence of the French over the Indians, and, on the other, the insistent demand of the Indians that French traders be allowed to go to them. Moreover, the com-

¹Ripperdá to the viceroy, June 24, 1774, in Expediente sobre la dolosa y fingida paz, 163.

²See the *Informe* of Mezières, July 4, 1772, in Expediente sobre proposiciones, 40-41. Mezières therein says, "I have not included the Bidais tribe among our friends, because the peace which they have made with the Apaches seems to be sufficient reason to consider them as quasi-enemies, and because it is notorious that they continue supplying these Apaches with fire-arms and munitions in exchange for mules and horses, well known to be stolen."

³Oconor to the viceroy, December 31, 1775. *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 41-42.

plaint that Ripperdá's administration was marked by French influence was well founded. Hence, if all these charges made against him were true, the only matters for surprise would be that he so persistently denied them, and that Ybarbo, while on the Trinity, seems to have made some show of cutting off illicit trade.

3. *The removal to Bucareli.*—Preparations for removal of the Adaesans to the Trinity were made in August, 1774. Before leaving Béxar the emigrants chose¹ for their prospective settlement the name of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli, thus perpetuating the memory of their former home,² and at the same time invoking the patronage of the viceroy, Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursua. The governor, in view of the distance of Paso Tomás from any settlement and of the fact that the new pueblo was to have no regular garrison, organized from their number a company of fifty militia, and named officers "for greater stimulation among them." Gil Ybarbo was made captain of the company and *justicia mayor*³ of the prospective pueblo, since he was, as Ripperdá said, "the best fitted and the most acceptable to his compatriots." Gil Flores was appointed lieutenant and Juan de la Mora alférez. These appointments were made subject to the viceroy's approval.⁴ Of guns and ammunition most of these "militia" had none, but the governor interceded with the viceroy to have this lack supplied, asking at the same time that a parish priest might be provided for ten years at government expense.⁵

¹Ripperdá to the viceroy, September 1, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 35. Ybarbo said that he was made captain on August 7 (Letter to the viceroy, March 22, 1791, Béxar Archives).

²Pilar de los Adaes.

³Bancroft is apparently wrong in calling Ybarbo *alcalde* of Bucareli (see his *North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 656).

⁴There is some evidence that the appointment of Ybarbo was approved on January 1, 1775, although it is not certain. An official statement dated at Béxar, January 17, 1784, says that Ybarbo began exercising the office of lieutenant governor of the pueblo of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli on the date named. Since, however, this is not the title which he was given by Ripperdá, and by which he was known—namely, captain of militia and *justicia mayor* of the pueblo—it seems probable that the statement referred to is unreliable.

⁵Ripperdá to the viceroy, September 1, 1774, and November 15, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 34-36.

Because of the poverty of the Adaesans, only a part of the families, including at the most not more than seventy full-grown men,¹ could get together an outfit for the exodus, and even these had to be aided by the missions with a supply of corn. Nearly all the rest, however, declared their intention to follow as soon as they could manage to get horses and a site should be selected.

Before September 1 the start for Paso Tomás was made,² the party being conducted by lieutenant Simón de Arocha and four soldiers; who were charged with the duty of founding the new pueblo.¹

Thus the little band of ignorant, poverty-stricken colonists had been able, through the aid of the governor, the vacillation of the viceroy, the delays of Oconor, and the personal force of their leader, Ybarbo, to circumvent the royal policy. They were now starting upon the first stage of a journey that was, when finished, to signalize a complete victory over the home government, and to take them back to the neighborhood of the place which they had been so reluctant to leave a year before.

4. *The growth of the settlement.*—As soon as the emigrants reached Paso Tomás, Ybarbo took the lead in forming the material beginnings of a settlement. Of his energy and efficiency as head of the community, Ripperdá always gave good report, which was sustained by his successor, Domingo Cabello, and by the religious who were put in charge of the spiritual affairs at Bucareli. Ripperdá reported that Ybarbo set the citizens a worthy example of thrift, aided them with his own tools, oxen, and mules, gave them good advice, and kept them in due subjection.

¹On September 1 Ripperdá wrote that only a few families had been able to go, yet there were enough, it seems, to form a company of fifty militia. On November 15 he wrote that Pilar de Bucareli had seventy men capable of bearing arms. There is some indication that others besides the first emigrants had gone by that time, hence I conclude that the first party included less than seventy adult men (*Quaderno que Corresponde*, 34-36). Ybarbo stated that a "large portion" of the Adaesans remained at Béxar (*Expediente Sobre . . . Parroco*, 2).

²This was the date upon which the governor reported the departure. Ripperdá said, several years after, that the settlement was begun in August (Letter to Croix, April 27, 1777, in *Documentos para la Historia . . . de Texas*, XXVIII, 223).

³*Expediente sobre el abandono*, 16.

Soon after arriving at the Trinity Ybarbo brought from Adaes the nails and other iron work of the houses that had been left there, powder, shot, six cracked cannons, and some gun carriage iron, to be utilized in the buildings and for the defense of the new pueblo. There were also brought to Bucareli two cannons from the deserted *presidio* at Orcoquisac and two that had been left at the Taovayas village by Colonel Parilla in his flight before the Indians in 1759.¹

In the buildings erected at Bucareli apparently neither stone nor adobe was used. The town was laid out with a plaza, with the houses surrounding it, as required by law. The cannons Ybarbo had mended and mounted, and round the place he built a wooden stockade.² The first church structure was a "decent chapel," built by the settlers shortly after their arrival, although at that time they had no minister. This chapel was soon replaced by a mere pretentious church supplied by Nicolas de la Mathe, the French trader with whom Ybarbo had so long sustained relations,³ and who was not tardy in visiting the new settlement and establishing himself in its good will. The motive assigned to La Mathe by the governor for this benevolence was extreme piety and special fondness for the patron saint of the pueblo, the Lady of Pilar. Be the truth as it may, early in 1776 he sent to Bucareli two carpenters, who built a wooden church twenty-five *varas* long, the

¹See a statement in the Béxar Archives concerning the whereabouts in 1792 of the soldiers and the cannon that had been at Los Adaes.

One of the terms of the treaty made in 1771 between the Taovayas and the Spaniards was that the latter should be allowed to remove the cannons (*Expediente sobre proposiciones*, 4). In 1772, when Mezières was at the Ovedsitas village on the upper Brazos, he organized a party to send for them, but later gave up the plan (*Ibid.*, 34). The cannons were very probably brought to Bucareli by Mezières about May 1, 1778. In April of that year he made a visit to the Taovayas village, while there he expressed his intention to remove them, and on his return he went direct to Bucareli (Mezières to Croix, May 2, 1778, in *Documentos para la Historia . . . de Texas*, XXVIII, 280, 283-284).

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 69-70; Botello to Cabello, December 23, 1778, in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 2-3.

³See page 84.

timber used being brought from the forest by the inhabitants.¹ When the removal had been made from Adaes the ornaments of the mission had been placed in charge of the governor. Some of them were taken to Bucareli early in 1775, and Ybarbo later on asked for the rest, but part of them, at least, remained in the governor's hands until after Bucareli had passed out of existence.²

Something more than a year after its beginning, Ripperdá was able to report that Bucareli contained, besides numerous *jacales*, twenty houses of hewn wood, grouped round the plaza, a wooden church, and a guard-house and stocks, the last two items having been provided at the personal expense of Ybarbo. And in June, 1777, Ybarbo reported that there were at the place more than fifty houses of hewn wood, corrals, fields, roads cut open, and an improved river crossing.³

The little settlement grew slowly in numbers by the addition of various odds and ends of humanity. Ybarbo brought some, but I suspect not all, of the people who had been left at El Lobanillo and Nacogdoches; some of the Adaesans who had remained at Bèxar followed, as they had intended; an occasional slave, escaped from Louisiana, drifted into the place: though Ripperdá professed to allow no citizens other than Adaesans to go to Bucareli, he made exceptions in case of "useless vagabonds" who might be at Bèxar; and finally, French traders flocked into Bucareli from Louisiana. During the winter of 1776-7 the pueblo was visited by an epidemic that made an inroad into its population by causing the death of seventeen persons. Among these, apparently, was lieutenant Gil Flores. At the same time the near-by Vidais Indian tribe was

¹Ripperdá to the viceroy, November 15, 1775, in Expediente sobre . . . Parroco, 3; Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in Quaderno que Corresponde, 69; Ripperdá to Croix, October 28, 1777, and Ybarbo to Ripperdá, June 30, 1777, both in Representacion del Justicia, 2-3.

²Ybarbo to Ripperdá, November 23, 1775, and to the viceroy, January 15, 1776, in Expediente sobre . . . Parroco, 3-4; Croix to Cabello, January 5, 1780, in the Bèxar Archives.

³Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in Quaderno que Corresponde, 69-70; Ybarbo to Ripperdá, June 30, 1777, in Representacion del Justicia, 2.

reduced by nearly one-half of its entire number.¹ What the nature of the malady was I do not know, but it was attributed to the excessive amount of water in the river valley. Before this epidemic there were in Bucareli, according to report, 99 "*vecinos*" or, as I understand the term, adult male residents.² A census taken some time in 1777 showed the population of the place to consist of three hundred forty-seven persons—one hundred twenty-five men, eighty-nine women, one hundred twenty-eight children, and five slaves.³ Round about lived the Vidais and other Indian bands. Small though it was, this was a growth that compared very favorably with that of the Spanish settlements that had grown up in Texas less irregularly and more under the paternal care of the government.

5. *Economic conditions.*—Bucareli was granted the usual favor accorded to new pueblos of exemption for ten years from all forms of royal taxation.⁴ As we have seen, one of the special advantages at first claimed for the place was its agricultural possibilities. True to the traditions of Mexican farming, Ripperdá had instructed Arocha to choose for the pueblo a site affording irrigation facilities. The location selected failing in these, which were little needed, as the event proved,⁵ the settlers sowed their first grain east of the Trinity, where there were some permanent lagoons. This crop was spoiled by a flood. The second summer they succeeded in raising a crop of corn west of the river, in a place pointed out by the Vidais Indians. Thereafter a number of families settled on *ranchos*, or farms, in this direction some distance from the

¹Mezières to Croix, March 18, 1778, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 2; Ripperdá to Croix, October 30, 1777, in Expediente sobre . . . Parroco, 12.

²Ripperdá to Croix, January 11, 1778, in los Vecinos, etc., 7.

³Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in Quaderno que Corresponde, 67-70; Ybarbo to the viceroy, November 25, 1775, in Expediente sobre . . . Parroco, 2; Cabello to Croix, May 31, 1779, Expediente sobre el abandono, 16.

⁴Representacion del Justicia, 6.

⁵Ybarbo told Mezières that good irrigation could be had at a distance of twelve leagues (Mezières to Croix, in Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establacer Comercio, 2).

pueblo. Here they raised at least one good crop of wheat before the settlement was abandoned.

Hoping to enable the place to supply its own blankets and coarse cloth, Ybarbo took from Béxar cotton seed, sheep, and a negro weaver, who was expected to teach his craft to the settlers. With a Béxar merchant, one Dn. Juan Ysurrieta, Ybarbo made a contract to have Bucareli furnished with merchandise in exchange for the prospective agricultural products of the place. Ripperdá professed to hope that Bucareli would in time prove especially productive of horses, cattle, small stock, tallow, soap, corn, wheat, and rice, and that it would not only furnish the *presidios* of Béxar and Bahía with horses, but also put an end to the frontier smuggling by furnishing the Indians with a substitute for French goods. Mezières, who visited Bucareli in March, 1778, reported that the place was well capable of becoming the basis of a rich trade with New Orleans, by way of the Trinity River and Opelousas, if such a boon should be allowed by the government.¹

Such dreams as these could have come true only on condition that the settlement had enjoyed a longer existence, that its population had been intelligent and enterprising, and that the government had changed its blind policy of discouraging the trade best calculated to induce the colonists to effort. As it was, the settlers were poor and shiftless, and during their short stay there they eked out an existence not far above that of their Indian neighbors, supplementing the scanty products of their fields and herds by hunting the buffalo and wild cattle that abounded between the Trinity and the Brazos.² From the testimony in the documents we are led to think that they spent a large part of their time in this pursuit. As the French who traded among the Indians in the vicinity were interested in fur dealing as well as in

¹Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 69-71 ; Botello to Cabello, December 23, 1778, in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 2; Mezières to Croix, March 18, 1778, in *Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establacer Comercio*, 2.

²*Expediente sobre el abandono*, 2, 8; *Representacion del Justicia*, 7, 9; *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 67-70.

They depended for supplies in part on the Tawakana Indians who lived on the Brazos near Waco (Mezières to Croix, April 5, 1778, in *Documentos para la Historia . . . de Texas*, XXVIII, 274).

procuring horses, it is reasonable to suppose that the Spanish colonists who engaged in hunting took advantage of the market for their peltries, exchanging them for the goods in which the French dealt. Of course, all trade between them and the French was contraband, for the Spanish government strictly forbade trade with Louisiana in any form.

6. *Spiritual affairs*.—Notwithstanding due efforts on the part of Ybarbo and the governor to secure a priest for Bucareli, there seemed to be some danger of the realization of the prophecy made by the *padres* of the mission at Bahía that the place would become a resort famed for “liberty of conscience” and “an asylum for apostates.”¹ The little flock went to their new pasture unaccompanied by a shepherd, and for more than two years remained without one. During that time they enjoyed no other spiritual aid than that afforded by two short visits made by some religious from Béxar.

It has been seen that when the Adaesans first requested permission to return to Los Ais they asked also that a minister might be provided for them ten years at government expense.² As soon as they left Béxar Ripperdá repeated the request, and asked of the bishop of Guadalajara, to whose jurisdiction Béxar now belonged, that the settlers be allowed to build a church. The latter petition was promptly granted.³ In February, 1775, temporary spiritual aid was furnished by the chaplain of the *presidio* at Béxar, who went to Bucareli, placed in the chapel which the settlers had built the image of the patron saint, the Lady of Pilar, and performed religious offices. A year later two missionaries from San Antonio spent a few days at Bucareli.⁴ Who they were I have not learned,

¹Cazorla wrote to the viceroy that the *padres* at the Bahía mission anticipated “the loss of many souls” at Bucareli. “Many wish to go to that settlement,” he said, “because it is notorious that in it the Indians keep peace for the sake of the barter or trade which is carried on with them, as well as because they live there, as it is understood, with liberty of conscience” (Letter of May 15, 1775, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 38).

²See page 90.

³Ripperdá to the viceroy, September 1, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 34; the bishop of Guadalajara to Ripperdá, December 19, 1775, in the Béxar Archives.

⁴Ybarbo to the viceroy, November 25, 1775, and Arrellano to Croix, April 27, 1777, both in *Expediente sobre . . . Parroco*, 2, 8. The

but there is some indication that one of them was Fr. Josef Francisco Mariano de la Garza, a Franciscan friar from mission San Antonio de Valero, who eventually became regularly installed at Bucareli.¹

Before this time Ybarbo had again addressed the viceroy on the subject of a regular pastor supported by the government, and again Ripperdá had seconded the request. In response, the viceroy, on the advice of Oconor, wrote Ripperdá, in August, 1776, that, since there were already ten religious on royal pay at the five missions near by, as a temporary measure the governor should require the president of the missions to send one of them to Bucareli until the disposal of that place should be decided. Ripperdá served the

bishop of Guadalajara to Ripperdá, December 13, 1775, in the B́exar Archives; Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 69.

¹Ybarbo to the viceroy, November 25, 1775; Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 15, 1776; Oconor to the viceroy, June 15, 1776; opinion of the fiscal, August 8, 1776—all in *Expediente sobre . . . Parruco*, 3-5; the viceroy to Ripperdá, August 21, 1776, in the B́exar Archives. The viceroy carelessly took Oconor's statement that there were five missions near the *presidio* of San Antonio to mean that they were near Bucareli. Arrellano caught him up on this point, as the text below shows. Arrellano said that he promptly sent to Bucareli a *padre*, whose name he did not mention, and asked him to have him relieved. Croix (June 24, 1777) recommended relieving him, without mentioning his name; and Ripperdá (August 30, 1777) mentioned Garza as the *padre* at Bucareli whom he had seen fit to relieve. As no other religious is mentioned in this connection, and as Garza's presence at Bucareli from this time on can be established, I conclude that he was the one sent in consequence of Ripperdá's order of September 27, 1776 (see *Expediente sobre . . . Parruco*, 12; *Representacion del Justicia*, 4; and *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 14, 38). Garza stated in his deposition made at Zacatecas in November, 1787 (see note 5, page 84), that he had known and dealt with Gil Ybarbo "almost without intermission, except for a few days," from February, 1776, to September, 1783. This would indicate that he was, perhaps, one of the two missionaries sent to Bucareli in the spring of 1776. But it seems that these missionaries returned in a short time, and that during the summer of 1776 the place was without a spiritual adviser. Hence his statement is puzzling. It appears that Ybarbo was in B́exar in February, 1776. This might account for the beginning of their acquaintance at this time, without supposing Garza to have been in Bucareli. In either case, I can not explain Garza's almost continuous dealings with Ybarbo after February, 1776.

order on September 27, and the president, Fr. Pedro Ramírez de Arrellano, "promptly" complied by sending Father Garza, mentioned above.

It now became a question whether Garza should remain at Bucareli or be relieved by one of the presidial chaplains of Bahía or Béxar. Though the president had obeyed, he resented the loss of his missionary, and ere long he appealed to Caballero de Croix, who was now *comandante general* of the Internal Provinces. To him he wrote that the viceroy's order was obviously based on an error, namely, the supposition that Bucareli was near the missions, when in fact it was one hundred forty leagues away; that, since one missionary must always be present at each mission to minister to the neophytes, if one were sent to Bucareli there would be no one to go into the forests to bring back absconded apostates or to seek new converts; and that, since the stipend of the *padres* was often the sole support of these Indians, they might suffer if one of the missionaries were removed. He concluded by suggesting that, since the bishop of Gandalaxara had entertained such a plan, one of the presidial chaplains should be sent occasionally to Bucareli—as had been done in the spring of 1775—and the missionary fathers required to take his place while absent.¹

Croix now yielded conditionally, and ordered the governor to relieve Garza by sending one of the presidial chaplains, unless he had good reasons for not doing so. But Ripperdá, instead of relieving Garza, wrote to Croix that the objections to doing so were strong; that the *presidios* would suffer more than the missions by the absence of their ministers; and finally, that he was hoping to establish a mission at Bucareli, in which case the services of a trained missionary would be indispensable. In this tilt with the president of the missions, the governor apparently won, for Garza remained the minister in charge at Bucareli to the end of its history.²

If we may judge of Garza's personality from his subsequent ferment, we would conclude that Bucareli was fortunate in secur-

¹Arrellano to Croix, April 27, 1777, in Expediente sobre . . . Parroco, 6-9.

²Croix to Ripperdá, June 24, 1777; Croix to Arrellano, June 25, 1777, and Ripperdá to Croix, August 30, 1777—all in Expediente sobre . . . Parroco, 9-11.

ing for its pastor a man of more than ordinary ability. After leaving Nacogdoches (in 1783), whither he went from Bucareli, he became president of the missions of the province of Texas, and later was reader in sacred theology, then assistant in the council (*discreto*) of the Franciscan College at Zacatecas.¹

A short time before Bucareli was abandoned another missionary, Fr. Juan Garcia Botello, was there. When or under what circumstances he went I have not been able to determine.²

Having secured a minister at government expense, Bucareli next applied for exemption from church tithes. In the summer of 1777 it was announced in the church that tithes would be collected, and two years' dues were gathered; but Ybarbo made this the occasion of appealing, in the name of the citizens, to Ripperdá, asking relief from this burden, on the ground of the poverty and misfortunes of the community, and of the public services which it had rendered. The petition was passed by the governor, with his approval, to Croix, who referred it to Pedro Galindo Navarro, the assessor of the commandancy general. Navarro recommended granting the request on two grounds, first, because Bucareli was exempt from all civil dues,¹ and second, because, since tithes were intended for the support of ministers of the altar, and since no religious of this class was serving there, the tithes could not legally be collected. Acting on this advice, Croix requested the church authorities at Guadalajara to exempt Bucareli for ten years, which request was soon granted.³

It has been seen that Ripperdá informed Croix in August, 1777, that he had hoped to establish a mission at Bucareli.⁴ This was

¹Testimony of Garza, November 14, 1787; Schmidt (Rev. Edmond, J. P.), *A Catalogue of Franciscan Missionaries in Texas, 1528-1859* (Austin, 1901). 10-11.

²In his letter of August 30, 1777, Ripperdá seems to say that Arrellano had been forced to send a second *padre* to Bucareli, although his meaning is not clear. This may have referred to Botello's going (Expediente Sobre . . . Parroco, 10. See also Quaderno que Corresponde, 72).

³Croix presented the request to the bishop, the dean, and the *cabildo* of the church of Guadalajara, by way of command and entreaty (*ruego y encargo*). For the facts involved in this paragraph, see Representacion del Justicia, *passim*.

⁴See page 114.

not the first indication that he entertained such a plan. It was clearly his desire from the first to gather around Bucareli as many Indian tribes as possible. His mission projects, however, seem to have looked primarily to collecting there the apostate Indians who had in times past deserted the various missions of the province—a prospect which he knew could not lack attractiveness to persons who had had experience with mission Indians. In January, 1776, he informed the viceroy that one purpose of sending the two missionaries just then about to depart for Bucareli was to minister to the neighboring Gentiles and to found a mission to attract apostates, and his subsequent requests for a minister for Bucareli were based in part upon this ground.

Often Ripperdá wrote hopefully about prospects for the fulfillment of his desires in this particular. Now he reported that many of the Indians living near Bucareli were being baptized and that the Kanrankawas were beginning to come to the pueblo to live; now that there were good indications that many apostates from the old mission of San Xavier would gather there: and again, that the T́exas, Quitseis, and Tonkawas were in the habit of coming for presents: that the Mayeses had failed to settle near the place only through groundlessly having taken offence with the Spanish: that he hoped, by gentle means, to retain the friendship of the Tawakanas with whom lived the desired apostate Xaranames: and that the Orcoquisacs, who had years before deserted their mission, were likely to come to settle near Bucareli, since they were imploring Ybarbo for a mission and were sending presents to Father Garza. In spite of these hopeful expressions, however,—which, doubtless, were as strong as the facts would justify,—nothing came of the plan for a mission at Bucareli except the baptism of numerous Vidais and a few other Indians, and the restoration of some of the Xaranames to Bahia, unless, perhaps, it is this plan that explains the presence of Botello at Bucareli in the fall of 1778.¹

7. *Ybarbo among the Indians and his search for the English.*—Ybarbo's activities were by no means confined to establishing the pueblo of Bucareli and administering its internal affairs. He

¹Ripperda to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 69, 71; to Croix, August 30, 1777, in *Expediente sobre . . . Parroco*, 11-12; and to Croix, October 28, 1777, in *Representacion del Justicia*, 4.

was equally active, as Ripperdá had predicted that he would be, in promoting good relations with the Indians and in watching the coast. Indeed, it was at Bucareli that Ybarbo received his best training for a more conspicuous career later on. His life at Adaes and El Lobanillo had given him some knowledge of Indian character, and now, by his four years in a position of responsibility, and at the same time of semi-independence, at Bucareli, he so extended his acquaintance with the natives and his knowledge of Indian affairs that he became very influential among the tribes of East Texas.

During these four years, he made—according to his own statement—in addition to hostile campaigns against the Comanches, no less than three friendly tours among the northern Indians and as many to the coast for the double purpose of conducting Indian relations and looking for Englishmen.¹ The governor ordered Lieutenant Arocha, when he founded Bucareli, to go with Ybarbo to invite the Vidais, Téxas, Quitsois, Yscanes, and, if possible, the more distant tribes, to come and live near the new establishment. Before Arocha returned to Béxar he and Ybarbo were able, through lack of horses, to visit only the Téxas and the Vidais.² But later, through friendly visits, presents, and other inducements, Ybarbo gradually attracted various bands to the vicinity of Bucareli to live or to trade and receive presents. In March, 1778, he went with Mezières and made a treaty with the Tonkawas, one of the conditions of which was that this tribe should regularly be visited by a trader.³ On the same expedition he, Garza, and Mezières persuaded part of the Xaranames living among the Tawakanas to return to their mission at Bahía.⁴

The most noteworthy of these expeditions was that made in 1777 to the mouth of the Sabine River. In the summer of that year a trader stationed among the Orcoquisac Indians reported to Ybarbo

¹Ybarbo to Ripperdá, June 30, 1777, in *Representacion del Justicia*, 2.

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, November 15, 1774, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 36.

³Ybarbo to Cabello, December 7, 1778, in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 5.

⁴Mezières to Croix, April 5, 7, and 8, 1778, in *Documentos para la Historia . . . de Texas*, XXV111, 273-278.

that in the mouth of the Neches River there was a stranded English vessel laden with bricks; that the bricks had been given to the Opelousas and the Atakapas Indians near by; and that there was another vessel in the mouth of the Trinity. Ybarbo at once got together thirty men and started for the coast, going first to the Orcoquisac town. The Indians here told him that the English had entered the Neches with small vessels to trade with the natives; that in the summer of 1774 they had remained long enough to sow a crop; and that the vessel now lying in the Neches had arrived in the previous May (1777), had missed the channel, and stranded, the occupants withdrawing, but promising to return. Ybarbo scolded the Indians for not reporting the matter promptly, and then, with ten men and two paid Indian guides, he reconnoitered the coast. He passed eastward along the shore and came upon the vessel, apparently in Sabine Lake. It still contained some bricks, but nothing else. Such other things as had been on board were seen in the possession of the near-by Atakapas. These Indians told Ybarbo that the English had left three men to guard the vessel until the main party should return, but nothing was seen of them by the Spaniards.

Ybarbo next returned to reconnoiter the mouth of the Trinity, but he did not find the vessel reported to have been there. Near the shore some distance farther west, however, he found an Englishman, lost and nearly naked. Ybarbo understood him to say that his name was Bautista Miler, that he had come from Jamaica bound for the Mississippi with a Captain named José David, who in order to rob him of some coffee, whiskey, and five negroes, had cast him adrift in a canoe, and that he had been lost for seven months.

This story told by Miler gives no further hint as to who the English were that the Spaniards had been hearing of and dreading in the direction of the coast.

Before returning to Bucareli, Ybarbo made a map of the coast from Sabine Pass to a point some distance west of the Trinity River. The sketch has historical value, particularly as it helps us to locate with some accuracy the old Spanish *presidio* of Orcoquisac.¹ After an absence of twenty-two days, Ybarbo returned with Miler in custody, and reported his exploit to Croix.

¹It is in volume LI, Sección de Historia, Archivo General.

Wishing to ascertain the truth about the other English vessel, Ripperdá dispatched a second expedition, composed of fifty men, including Ybarbo and thirty of his militia, to reconnoiter the coast from where Ybarbo had left off to the Colorado. The party set out from Bucareli July 11, 1777, but what it accomplished does not appear.¹

8. *Contraband trade, and the question of suppressing Bucareli.*—To what extent the establishment of Bucareli actually increased or decreased smuggling in its vicinity it is hard to determine. It had previously existed among the Indians thereabout and it continued to flourish, but the exact part taken in it by Ybarbo and his colonists is a difficult matter to decide, for the evidence is conflicting. If we were to accept, unquestioned, the reports of Ybarbo and Ripperdá we would conclude that the latter made special efforts to prevent it. But, though there is some evidence that this was the case, there are also indications pointing the other way.

Ybarbo found French traders from Adaes and Natchitoches among the Vidais Indians when he first went to establish Bucareli. Some of them, whose Spanish wives went to live at Bucareli, applied for residence there, which, according to Ripperdá, was granted only upon condition of their giving up Indian trade.² Bucareli had scarcely been founded when La Mathe, apparently king of the Indian traders, arrived at the place, with a pass from the governor authorizing him to "collect some debts"—a subterfuge, more than likely, to enable him to continue his traffic.³ As we have seen, he put himself into the good graces of the community by building a church for it, but one is inclined to be skeptical when told that he did this through extreme piety alone, particularly when informed by one of Ybarbo's admirers that La Mathe and Ybarbo kept up

¹The story given here is based on Ripperdá's letter to Croix, dated August 30, 1777, accompanying which is the map referred to. I have not seen Ybarbo's original report to the governor. Navarro's report to Croix, dated June 8, 1779, has aided me in reading Ripperdá's letter (see Expediente sobre . . . Parroco, 13-19).

²Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1776, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 67.

³See page 84.

former relations during the whole existence of Bucareli, buying and selling of each other, just as before.¹

A few instances of actual smuggling at Bucareli came to light, and, we may assume that, in the nature of the case, for each one that was reported numerous others escaped notice. The reports of these cases suggest much more than they actually say in regard to what was going on. In the spring of 1775 some men from Bahía, who had been across the Guadalupe River, met a party of Béxar men coming from Bucareli with French tobacco in their possession, some of which the men from Bahía obtained. The Béxar men reported that the article was plentiful at Bucareli, whither it was being brought by Frenchmen, who also traded with the Indians. The matter reaching the ears of Captain Cazorla, he, by strategy, verified the report, identified one of the culprits at Béxar, and notified Ripperdá. The governor replied that he had ascertained that the amount of tobacco smuggled had been small. Cazorla afterwards intimated, however, that the governor may not have taken "due pains" to find out. Cazorla reported the affair to the viceroy, with the comment that "it appears that the sole motive of the subjects who go to Bucareli to live is to smuggle and to be free from the yoke of justice." He added that, since so many were desirous of going to that place where license reigned, and where the Indians were more friendly than elsewhere, there was danger of depopulating and weakening the defenses of the other settlements.²

Not long after this Ybarbo seized contraband goods from one Marcos Vidal, of Béxar, who was on the way from Natchitoches. Vidal was sent in custody to Béxar, was convicted of smuggling and imprisoned, but escaped. These two cases show that the Spaniards as well as the French and Indians engaged in the forbidden trade.³

On another occasion Ybarbo confiscated a large quantity of merchandise from Augustin de Grevenverge,⁴ captain of militia

¹See Garza's deposition of November 14, 1787, in the Béxar Archives.

²Cazorla to the viceroy, May 14, 1775, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 37.

³Ripperdá to the viceroy, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 68. A report of the case is in Béxar Archives.

⁴Variously spelled in the documents.

at Atakapas, in Louisiana, who was on his way to Béxar to trade for horses and mules, ignorant, he claimed, of the law forbidding trade between the provinces. How this could be when these prohibitions were so oft repeated is a matter to cause wonder, but when the trifling affair finally reached clear to the royal throne this excuse was accepted by His Majesty.¹

Cazorla's report to the viceroy established at once in Mexico a bad reputation for Bucareli, and set on foot an attempt to remove it from the frontier. On the advice of Areche,² Ripperdá was instructed, in July, 1775, to report upon the reputed disorders at Bucareli, and, if necessary, without further notice to remove its inhabitants nearer to the center of the province.³ Cazorla was complimented for his vigilance and enjoined to continue it, while Oconor, to whom was sent a copy of Cazorla's letter, was requested to hurry up and decide the final disposition to be made of the Adaesans. He was even to send them to Los Ais if he saw fit, the royal order to the contrary notwithstanding.⁴ Oconor did not reply until December 31, but on that date he expressed to the viceroy the strongest condemnation of Bucareli; repeated the objections that he had made to allowing Adaesans to go to Los Ais; indulged in more or less "I told you so"; gave Ybarbo a bad name; and declared his disappointment that the governor should establish the settlers in the very place best calculated to cause trouble. To permit them to remain, he said, was certain to have evil consequences. He recommended, therefore, that the matter be taken out of Ripperdá's hands and put into Cazorla's, giving him authority to distribute the Bucareli settlers at Béxar, Bahía, and Arroyo del

¹In Expediente sobre comercio reciproco entre las Provincias de la Luisiana y Texas, 4-6 (Vol. 43, Sección de Historia, Archivo General). is a copy of the memorandum of the goods confiscated by Ybarbo.

²Areche to the viceroy, July 13, 1775, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 38-39. Areche said in his note, "It appears that this settlement presents some dangers that, lest they increase, ought to be remedied, and at the opportune moment cut off at the roots."

³The viceroy to Ripperdá, July 26, 1775, in the Béxar Archives.

⁴Areche to the viceroy, July 13, 1775, and Cazorla to the viceroy, February 27, 1776, both in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 39, 65; Oconor to the viceroy, December 31, 1775, *Ibid.*, 40-54. The date of the order to Oconor was July 26, 1775.

Cíbolo as the royal order had required.¹ On hearing from Oconor, the government again, in February, 1776, referred the matter to him, and decided that no further step should be taken in Mexico until Ripperdá should be heard from. His report, when it came,² containing only contradictory testimony, the government concluded to try to get at the truth of the situation by having the president of the Texas missions make a report based on the testimony of the religious at Bucareli. Oconor, not to be outdone in the matter of procrastination, decided, in April, to suspend action until he could go in person to Béxar, and, in conference with the *cabildo*, consider the whole matter. This, he said, was the only way to avoid the endless importunities which "some persons might make, with the sole purpose of succeeding in their caprice of not obeying the viceroy's and his [Oconor's] repeated orders."³ Thus, so far as any immediate action on the part of Oconor or the viceroy was concerned, the French, Spaniards, and Indians on the frontier were left free to carry on illicit trade at will. But Ripperdá consistently denied that it was openly allowed by the Texas authorities. Although he admitted that it existed, he claimed that Ybarbo was active in trying to prevent it, that the citizens of Bucareli were law-abiding, and that positive public advantages would be realized by fostering the settlement which was under such general suspicion.⁴ He defended the place to the last. Shortly before he retired from the office of governor he urged that it be reinforced by sending to it the Adaesans still remaining in Béxar, instead of trying to form of them a new pueblo at Béxar, Arroyo del Cíbolo, or on the Guadalupe or the San Marcos River, as was then being talked of.⁵

Had Oconor remained in power, it is not at all improbable that

¹Oconor to the viceroy, December 31, 1775, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 40-45.

²It was dated January 25, 1776.

³Areche to the viceroy, February 21, 1776, and May 2, 1776; Oconor to the viceroy, April 5, 1776—all in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 54, 72, 66.

⁴Ripperdá to the viceroy, January 25, 1775, in *Quaderno que Corresponde*, 67-71.

⁵Ripperdá to Croix, January 11, 1778, in *Los Vecinos*, etc., 7. Croix was at this time in Béxar.

as soon as his hands had become really free he would have carried out the royal order to the letter and suppressed the place. But Bucareli now profited by another year's delay due to Oconor's pre-occupation, and then by a change in the government. Early in 1777 the affairs of the Internal Provinces were put into the hands of a *comandante general*, independent of the viceroy. The person appointed to this office was Caballero de Croix. The mere change of administration gave Bucareli an additional term of grace, and, of more importance, it transferred the supervision of the interests of Texas from Oconor, the main opponent of Bucareli, to Croix, who was not only opposed to the royal policy of withdrawing from East Texas,¹ but who also enjoyed a high degree of independence in his office.

It was more than a year after Croix took charge of affairs before he reopened the question of Bucareli's continuance or suppression. Then, in July, 1778, he ordered that Domingo Cabello should be requested to report, as soon as he should take charge of the office of governor of Texas, upon the advantages and disadvantages of Bucareli.² But before Cabello replied the fate of Bucareli had been decided independently of governmental authority.

VI. THE COMANCHE RAID ON BUCARELI AND THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN NACOGDOCHES.

1. *The Comanche troubles at Bucareli, May and October, 1778.*—One of the advantages that had been claimed for Bucareli was that it was protected by the powerful Tonkawas³ and Tawa-

¹On May 18, 1779, he wrote to Mezières stating that Texas was, of all the Spanish provinces, one of those most worthy of attention, because of its size, fertility, good climate, and location (Mezières to Croix, October 7, 1779, reviewing the letter to Croix referred to, in *Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establecer Comercio*, 7-8). In 1778 he tried hard to secure permission to open up trade between the provinces of Texas and Louisiana (*Expediente sobre Comercio Reciproco*).

²Croix to Navarro, July 24, 1778, in *Representacion del Justicia*, 7. Croix to Cabello, July 30, 1778, cited in Cabello to Croix, May 31, 1779, in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 13.

³The Tonkawa tribe was at this time one of the most numerous of those in Texas. It was estimated in 1778 that it comprised 300 warriors (*Informe del Gobernador de Texas*, in Vol. 64, *Provincias Internas*, *Archivo General*).

kanas from the dreaded Comanches. And this claim seems to have been well founded, for it was more than three years before the peace of the settlement was disturbed by the Comanches' unwelcome presence. But at last it became the object of their depredations.

One day in May, 1778, the inhabitants of Bucareli were frightened half out of their wits by the arrival in the neighborhood of about thirty warriors of this tribe led by the son of the head chief, Evea. Ybarbo sallied out with his men, however, and pursued the Indians, overtook them at the Brazos, killed three, and put the rest to flight. The story of this occurrence rests upon the testimony of Ybarbo, Garza, Botello, and Mezières, who agree upon the points thus far stated. But as to the object of the Comanches' visit to the pueblo there is conflicting testimony. Ybarbo, Garza, and Botello represented the occurrence as an attack, and Garza even claimed that the Indians stole some of the horses of the settlers. Mezières, however, who happened to be in the neighborhood at the time, and who doubtless got his information from the Comanches, told and professed to believe a different story. According to his version, the Indians were on the way to make a friendly visit to himself, had camped near the ranches at Bucareli, had turned their horses loose, and were resting—anything but hostile actions—when they were frightened off by the boisterous commotion raised by the terrified Spaniards in their haste to corral their stock and raise an attacking party. When he heard this story from Croix, Governor Cabello flatly rejected it, justly I suspect, on the ground that in the first place it was absurd to assume, as did Mezières, that a Comanche would approach a Spaniard settlement with friendly intent, and secondly, that he had full confidence in the testimony of the three eye-witnesses of the event—particularly that of Botello, whom he had closely questioned on the matter—and that all of them had represented the Comanche visit as an attack.¹

¹See Botello to Cabello, December 23, 1778; Garza to Cabello, January 8, 1779; Ybarbo to Cabello, January 12 and October 19, 1779; Cabello to Croix, August 31, 1779—all in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 2, 5, 7, '8, 17, 38; Mezières to Croix, November 15, 1778, in *Expediente sobre el abandono* . . . y establecer Comercio, 4.

Ybarbo (letter of January 12) reported the date of the Comanche visit

Whatever may have been the purpose of this first visit of the Comanches, the object of the second was not doubtful. In October of the same year, Bucareli was raided by a much larger party than the one that had approached before. Driving off two hundred seventy-six horses, mainly the property of Nicolas de la Mathe, the Comanches crossed the Brazos. Here, at the point where they had on the former occasion been overtaken, they left an ambush to cover their retreat. The Spaniards apparently followed, but hearing of the ambush, gave up the pursuit, and the Indians escaped with their rich booty.¹ Near a Taguayas village they left the stock in charge of seven braves. Soon this guard was attacked by a party of Quitseis and Texas, both of which tribes were friendly toward the Spanish. In the fight three Comanches were killed and the horses were taken. But the triumph was short, for the escaping Comanches returned with friends, overtook their enemies, killed three Texas warriors, and recovered the horses.²

This raid on the Bucareli ranches was followed by rumors in the settlement that something worse was to be expected at the hands of the Comanches. Traces were found indicating that Indian spies had effected a night entrance into the stockade and learned the weakness of its defence. Rumors were brought in by French traders and friendly Indians now to the effect that the Indians were planning the total destruction of the place by burning the town, killing the men, and carrying off the women and children; now that traces of Comanches had been seen in the neighborhood of Nabasat; and again that their attack was delayed only to secure the alliance, or at least the neutrality, of the Vidais and other Indians friendly to the Spaniards.³

Such rumors as these were usually very disturbing to Spanish as May 3 (*tres*). According to Mezières (letter cited above) it was after May 6. This leads me to suspect that *tres* in my copy of Ybarbo's letter should be *trece* (13).

¹See references cited above, note 1, page 124. The different accounts vary somewhat as to the number of horses stolen on this occasion.

²Ybarbo to Cabello, December 7, 1778, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 4.

³Ybarbo to Cabello, December 7, 1778, and January 12, 1779; Botello to Cabello, December 23, 1778; and Garza to Cabello, January 8, 1779—all in Expediente sobre el abandono, 2-6.

settlements stronger and less isolated than Bucareli, and we need not be surprised that they terrorized this weak village. Ybarbo could muster only a handful of men, and these poorly equipped. The cannons were useless to resist a surprise attack. The houses were of wood and easily combustible, and the stockade was in a bad state of repair. Ybarbo feared, moreover, the disaffection of the Tonkawas, one of the tribes on which Bucareli relied for protection. In the March preceding, he and Mezières had promised to send them a trader, for whom they had asked. But the promise had not been kept, and the Indians were complaining. To pacify them Ybarbo was compelled to make them presents at his own expense.¹

To strengthen the means of defense, Ybarbo appealed to the governor for arms and ammunition, but without practical avail. Once more he collected a handful of men and went out to reconnoiter, but, after one day's march, upon being overtaken by a messenger and informed that a large party of Comanches and Taguayas were between the San Xavier and the Brazos, on the way to attack the Spaniards and the Vidais, he turned back.²

Of the situation in Bucareli, Father Garza, who was there, now wrote: "These miserable inhabitants are left in such a deplorable state that they have no way even to hunt for food . . . for they can not go out to hunt except in large numbers and well armed, nor yet can they go out together and with their weapons, lest they should leave the settlement helpless. . . . Hence they can follow no other occupation than to be continually on guard of the horses and the settlement, relieving each other morning and night. The time left free from this fatiguing work they spend in witnessing the need and the miseries of their families, without being able to furnish them daily food by the ordinary work of hunting, fishing, or other similar means, and, moreover, without hope of remedy in the future, since the best time for sow-

¹Ybarbo to Cabello, December 7, 1778, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 5.

²This event happened some time before December 7, 1778, when Ybarbo reported it to Cabello (Expediente sobre el abandono, 4-5. See also his letter of January 12, 1779. *Ibid.*, 9.)

ing wheat has passed without a grain being sown up to the present."¹

2. *The flight from Bucareli, January-February, 1779.*—The settlers now began to appeal either for protection or for permission to remove to the neighborhood of the T^{exas} villages to the eastward.² It is a matter for comment that they did not request permission to go to B^{exar}, where the defences of the province were strongest and where the king had ordered that they should establish themselves, but that, instead, they asked to be allowed to return a step nearer to the place whence they had been removed in 1773. Whether the suggestion of a removal came from Ybarbo or from some one else I can not say. The first mention of such a plan in the correspondence is found in a letter written in December,³ 1778, by Father Botello, who had recently returned from Bucareli. In response to an inquiry made by Governor Cabello about the condition of affairs at Bucareli, Botello said that, in his opinion, the place should be abandoned; that, besides being threatened with destruction by the Comanches, it was incapable of irrigation and had proved unhealthful because of heavy rains; that these shortcomings could be remedied and all of the advantages of Bucareli with respect to fertility and location⁴ secured at little additional cost by establishing the settlers "on the Neches River among the pueblos of T^{exas}, on the Angelina River among the pueblos of the same tribe, with even greater security in the place where the mission of Nacogdoches formerly was, with much more on the Atoyaque River, and with advantages and security beyond comparison at the site of the mission of Los Ais, on the road from Natchitoches, thirty-nine leagues from that post."⁵ It is not at all

¹Garza to Cabello, January 8, 1778, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 6.

²Ybarbo to Cabello, January 12, and January 27, 1779, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 8.

³December 23.

⁴The advantages of Bucareli's location he conceived to be its position midway between Natchitoches and B^{exar}, and its importance as a place from which to watch the coast and to keep up friendly relations with the Indians.

⁵Botello to Cabello, December 23, 1778, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 2-6.

maining stock. The women and children and some of the stock were saved on improvised boats and rafts and removed to higher land quite a distance from the river. Here the people remained a few days, when they were again molested by Comanches, who, after what was reported to be an all night siege, ran off thirty-eight head of horses that had been saved from the deluge, and then killed, near-by, half a dozen Indians friendly to the Spanish. After this raid, haste was made to remove the people in boats to the east bank of the river, but here they were again disturbed by the Indians.¹ Being now thoroughly frightened by the Indians and evicted by fire and flood, Ybarbo at once set out for the T       country with the remainder of the settlers.²

3. *The beginnings of modern Nacogdoches.*—On the way he apparently picked up the people who had gone on before and who were living scattered among the Indians. The journey was continued toward the northeast “until,” to use the words of Ybarbo in his report to Croix, “there were seen the site of the T       Indians and, three leagues beyond, the old mission of Nacogdoches, where there was a small chapel in which the reverend father may perform the holy sacraments and a house where he may live,³ as well as plenty of water, lands, and materials for houses.” He does not mention the Old Stone Fort,¹ which it has been supposed had

¹Ybarbo to Croix, May 13, 1779, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 22; Cabello to Croix August 31, 1779; *Ibid.*, 37; Garza to Croix, April 30, 1779, *Ibid.*, 23.

²When the settlers left Bucareli they left six cannons, four of which were sooner or later taken to Nacogdoches. Those remaining at Bucareli were ordered sent to B      , and in 1793 steps were taken to remove them thither, but that they ever reached there I can not say (see a document entitled “Provincia de Texas, A       1792,” and a letter from Revilla Gigedo to Governor Mu      , April 10, 1793, both in B       Archives).

³Mezi      , in his letter of August 23, 1779, testifies to the fact that the mission buildings were still standing when the Spaniards returned. He says “It [the mission] is situated at the foot of a knoll, where its buildings still remain” (Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establecer Comercio, 6).

⁴It is just possible that one of the buildings mentioned by Ybarbo, the chapel or the house, was identical with what has been known as the Old Stone Fort, which has recently been torn down, but this is improbable. I can not assert with confidence that Ybarbo did not build the Old Stone

been built there before this time.¹ "I approached," he continues, "in order that we might sow grain to support ourselves and to await the decision of your Grace, whom I humbly beg to approve this my action, since it is impossible to return to the same place or to the banks [of the river] below or above, because the lands are low, or farther away [from the river], because of even greater risk. There is not to be found in this vicinity another place better than this one or the one which was granted to us by his Excellency, the viceroy,² and this one facilitates watching the movements and operations of the friendly Indian nations and keeping in touch with the doings of the traders, as well as getting news from the coast, a matter with which I am charged by my governor."³

Unless some of the Bucareli families who had set out in January reached Nacogdoches in advance of Ybarbo—and it would appear that they did not—this entry of Ybarbo's into the abandoned mission was the beginning of the modern city of Nacogdoches, for the continuous existence of a settlement there from this time forward can be traced.

There would be some satisfaction in being able to give the exact date when this event took place, but from the available records I am unable to do so. The best that I can do is to say it was certainly as early as April 30, the date of the first communication from Nacogdoches known to me. On that day Father Garza wrote from there to Croix recounting the story of the Bucareli flood, stating that Ybarbo had already given a report of the situation at Nacogdoches, and using terms that imply that all or nearly all of

Fort for defense against the Indians soon after going to Nacogdoches, as has been supposed was the case. Indeed, in one communication he refers indefinitely to "fortifying" the place, but this probably meant the building of a wooden stockade. A strong indication that the Fort had not been built before September 4, 1788, is the testimony of Francisco Xavier Fragosó in his *Derrotero* (see page 69). He notes that at Nacogdoches, where he arrived on that date, the houses were of wood and eighty or ninety in number. If so substantial a building as the Old Stone Fort had been there, he in all probability would have mentioned it as a noteworthy object.

¹See *The American Magazine* for April, 1888, pp. 721-728.

²That is, Los Ais (see page 96).

³Ybarbo to Croix, May 13, 1779, in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 23.

the settlers from Bucareli had already arrived.¹ Ybarbo's first report of his arrival at Nacogdoches I have not been able to find. The earliest communication of his from there that I have seen is dated May 9. It is a letter to Governor Cabello, and contains language implying that he had been at Nacogdoches some time and that Cabello already knew about the removal from Bucareli.² In reporting to Croix on May 13 the story of the desertion of Bucareli³ he says that more than a hundred days were spent in getting to Nacogdoches. To have been true this could not have referred to the party he conducted, for he did not leave Bucareli till some days after February 14. Neither could it have referred to the whole party led by Garza, because one hundred days from January 25, when he set out, was May 5; but, as we have seen, some, if not most, of the settlers had arrived at Nacogdoches as early as April 30. If Ybarbo's statement was true, therefore, he probably meant that it was one hundred days from the time when Garza started before all the stragglers who had stopped by the way arrived at the new settlement.

It is necessary here to correct an error that crept into the story of the abandonment of Bucareli as it was told in the Spanish correspondence, namely, the assertion that the cause of leaving the place was the flood. It is clear from the above account that the Comanche raid was the external cause of the removal of the people to the east, and that the flood did not occur till nearly three weeks after most of them had left. Yet, through an increasing emphasis of what was in reality a secondary matter, it soon became current in the government accounts that the change of location had been primarily due to the overflow of the Trinity.³

¹Expediente sobre el abandono, 23-24.

²*Ibid.*, 32-33.

³It is true, however, that a previous flood had destroyed the crops at the place, and that the recurrence of the disaster may have been a strong reason for not returning to Bucareli (Botello to Cabello, December 23, 1778, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 2-3). Interesting examples of the way the story became distorted are the following: "In reviewing Cabello's first report Croix wrote, "The governor of the province of Texas says . . . that because an inundation occurred at that pueblo and the Comanches stole the greater part of their horses, they were so frightened that they have deserted the settlement" (Croix to Cabello, May 21, 1779,

4. *Nacogdoches recognized by the government.*—Since it is not my aim to pursue the history of East Texas beyond the foundation of Nacogdoches, it only remains to show how this place, settled without authority, secured recognition from the government, and to indicate briefly the importance it soon attained.

The main purpose of Ybarbo and Garza in their first reports to Croix of the desertion of Bucareli was to show their unwillingness to return thither, and to secure permission to remain at Nacogdoches. By this time Ybarbo had changed his mind as to the relative desirability of Los Ais, for he concluded the letter of May 13 to Croix with the opinion that of the two available places for a settlement, Los Ais and Nacogdoches, the advantages were with the latter.¹ At the same time that he was asking Croix for permis-

in Expediente sobre el abandono, 12). Croix's assessor general, Navarro, in reviewing the history of Bucareli in 1780, wrote that "the flood which the river caused, and the fire which followed it, reduced to ashes the buildings that had been made, and obliged the settlers to disperse and seek shelter and asylum among the friendly nations near by" (Expediente sobre el abandono y establecer Comercio, 45-46).

¹With respect to returning to Bucareli Garza had written two weeks before (Letter to Croix, April 30, 1779, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 23-24): "It is now wholly impossible to restore this population to the same unprotected place whence they fled, without exposing them to greater and more evident perils than those which they have already experienced, because—not to mention this hostility [of the Comanches], which was the cause of their flight and which may be greater in the future,—that district has been proved uninhabitable by the inundation which it suffered on the 14th of February." To possible locations elsewhere on the Trinity or nearer to San Antonio he was even less favorable. "Since this is the place formerly considered the best," he wrote, "I judge that such other as there may be on that river to the north or to the south are as bad if not worse. And not less unsuitable are the places which might offer some advantages toward the west between the Brazos, San Marcos, and Guadalupe rivers, since these places, because of their large *encenadas*, are the paths of ingress and egress for the Comanches, and are much more dangerous [than the others] in proportion as they are more frequented by these Indians, nearer their lands, and distant from the friendly tribes, circumstances which, having been weighed by these settlers, led them to flee to this vicinity." His opinion of Nacogdoches, on the contrary though based mainly on hearsay, as he frankly admitted, was highly favorable, and he intimated—what Ybarbo expressed—a preference for it over Los Ais. "Under these circumstances," he continued, "there is no doubt that your Grace's generous piety will deign to approve this temporary withdrawal,

sion to remain at Nacogdoches, he was making recommendations to Cabello that implied an expectation that his request would not be refused. These recommendations were of a kind that he knew would appeal to the government, since they concerned the control of the Indian tribes about him. In May he reported¹ that the Tonkawa Indians who had been promised traders and had been disappointed were becoming insolent; and as a remedy he suggested that a trading post should be established at Nacogdoches and that a commissary should be stationed there. A month later he reported new difficulties with the Indians, and said that Nacogdoches should be supplied with a good garrison.²

Croix and Cabello discussed the new situation without any reference to the royal order in response to which the Adaesans had been removed from the frontier further than to indicate that they were aware that it was not being complied with. They both showed plainly that they desired that Ybarbo be allowed to remain wherever he would be most useful as an Indian agent, the only question being what was the most desirable location. When Croix learned

and, if it be your superior wish, concede them permission to attempt to establish their settlement in another place—even if it be in (*hasta la*) the old mission of Los Ais, which the excellent viceroy, Dn. Fr. Antonio Bucareli granted them—where, free from hostile invasions, they may in some measure retrieve what they have lost in all these removals. . . . And I believe that the advantages which, they assure me, this depopulated mission of Nacogdoches possesses, will contribute to this end. Although the site for the settlement is not the best nor the most beautiful, it is yet the most suitable, judging from what I have heard and the little which I have seen, for it is on firm land, commanding, entirely free from inundation, and between two *arroyos* abundantly supplied with good water. Besides having a healthful climate, it enjoys the advantage of having near by many spacious plains of proved fertility, some more and others less watered, for the grain, and open commons (*eridos*), good pastures, and numerous springs of water, for raising horses and cattle, and affords all other conveniences that these people could wish for their relief. The advantage to the province resulting from their settlement in this place would not be slight, through their being able to visit the friendly Indians frequently—having them near by—and to promptly report everything that they may attempt anew contrary to the peace promised to your excellency.”

¹In his letter of May 9, cited before.

²Letter to Cabello, June 13, 1779, in Expediente sobre el abandono.

of the break-up of Bucareli he left the temporary disposition of the inhabitants to Cabello, giving him permission to bring them back to the Trinity River, or, better, as he thought, to establish them in any one of the places to the northeast that had been suggested by Botello. Far from recommending that they be brought back to Béxar, to do which now was the opportune time if it was to be done at all, he distinctly said that such a procedure "would be prejudicial to the plans which are being meditated, by interfering with the cultivation of the friendship of the T́exas and other allied tribes."¹ Cabello, who had already given his opinion that Bucareli could not be held against the Comanches without a garrison,² soon expressed a preference for Nacogdoches over any other place, approved Ybarbo's request for a garrison on regular pay, and recommended that it be formed of the settlers already there.³

While Croix and Cabello thus favored Nacogdoches, Mezières advocated re-occupying Bucareli. We have already seen the good opinion entertained by him of the site of Bucareli, and his charge that the Comanche attack which caused its desertion had been brought on by the foolish fears of the Spaniards. Now, in August, 1779, he visited Nacogdoches to assist the settlers during the absence of Ybarbo in pursuit of Comanches, and while there he wrote to Croix a gloomy account of the situation of the inhabitants. He criticised their location, said that plenty of places safe from flood could be found near Bucareli, insisted, as before, on the importance of a settlement there to maintain Indian relations and with a view to opening up trade with New Orleans, and suggested that the people be sent back there and reinforced by a regular garrison and by the Adaesans who had remained at Béxar.¹ But Mezières died

¹Croix to Cabello, May 21, 1779, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 12-13.

²Cabello to Croix, February 11, 1779, in Expediente sobre el abandono, 12.

³Cabello to Croix, May 31, 1779, April 30, 1779, and August 31, 1779—all in Expediente sobre el abandono, 13, 19, 31. In his letter of May 31, In his letter of May 31, Cabello said that he was hardly decided as to the respective merits of the two places, but by the time of his next letter he had no doubts.

⁴He said that the first crop sown at Nacogdoches had failed and that the people were "scattered among the Gentile Indians, carrying what they

soon after the expression of this opinion,¹ and the only effective opposition to the occupation of Nacogdoches was removed.

Only to Navarro, in Chihuahua, did it occur that perhaps, in order to fulfill the king's command made seven years before, Ybarbo and his people should be brought to the neighborhood of Béxar. But even to him this was but a passing thought, and he recommended, instead, that choice be made between Bucareli and Nacogdoches, and that the decision be left to an impartial observer after a careful examination of the two sites.² Croix appointed as this impartial observer, governor Cabello, whose preference was already known. But Cabello found excuses for not performing the commission himself or delegating it to any one else, while Croix claimed that he knew of no one outside of Texas available to fill the place.³ And thus the matter appears to have dropped by a tacit understanding, and the pueblo of Nacogdoches remained undisturbed.

Not only did Croix and Cabello refrain from breaking up the settlement, but, in effect, they legalized its existence by assigning Ybarbo a salary and conferring on him a new and more dignified title. At Bucareli Ybarbo and his men had served without pay and had furnished their own arms and ammunition. Ybarbo claimed, besides, that making presents to the Indians and aiding the settlers had cost him a goodly sum from his own private means. He asked, therefore, shortly before leaving the place, that arms and ammunition be furnished him and his men, and that they be paid for time spent in actual service. Ripperdá, and after him his successor, Governor Cabello, supported his request before Croix. Failing to secure his demands, Ybarbo now threatened that he would leave his post. The effect of this threat discloses the real attitude of Cabello and Croix toward Ybarbo's presence on the frontier.

possess, offering clothing for food, bartering hunger for nakedness" (*Expediente sobre el abandono . . . y establecer Comercio*, 6-8).

¹Some time before January 18, 1780 (*Expediente sobre el abandono*, 46).

²Navarro to Croix, January 17, 1780, in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 46-48.

³Croix to Cabello, January 29, 1780; Cabello to Croix, April 1, 1780; Croix to Cabello, January 19, 1780—all in *Expediente sobre el abandono*, 50-53.

Cabello wrote to the *comandante general* that it would be unwise to let Ybarbo retire, since there was no one else in the province who could wield such an influence among the Indians and do so much towards keeping them quiet. In consequence of this opinion, Croix in October, 1779, assigned Ybarbo a salary of five hundred *pesos* a year.¹ At the same time Cabello conferred on him the title of Lieutenant-Governor of the Pueblo of Nacogdoches.² That he was ever formally commissioned to this office I cannot say, but it was as such that he was thereafter dealt with by both the governor and the *comandante general*. It is plain, therefore, that Ybarbo was no longer remaining on the frontier by mere sufferance, but that, on the contrary, he was kept there through the positive desire of Cabello and Croix to maintain an influence over the Indians of the northeast.

With the occupation of Nacogdoches begins a new and important epoch in the history of the Spanish régime on the Texas-Louisiana frontier, and of the developments there Nacogdoches instead of Adaes becomes the center. The trading house asked for by Ybarbo was established and the Indian trade was reorganized. Nacog-

¹Ybarbo to Croix, October 19, 1778; Ripperdá to Croix, October 31, 1778; Croix to Cabello, January 12, 1779; Cabello to Croix, April 3, 1779—all in Expediente sobre el abandono, 16-18. Croix to Cabello, January 16, 1779; Cabello to Croix, March 30, 1779; Croix to Cabello, October 15, 1779; and Cabello to Croix, December 17, 1779—all in the Béxar Archives.

²The first use of this title that I have found was by Cabello in a letter to Croix, dated December 17, 1779 (Béxar Archives). He then calls him captain of militia and lieutenant governor of the pueblo of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Nacogdoches. Cabello's letter notifying Ybarbo that he had been assigned a salary was dated March 11, 1780. It would seem that this letter was considered by Ybarbo as the source of his authority and the title to his pay, for in after years, when an attempt was being made to remove him, he furnished a copy of the letter as evidence of his official standing. That the government also considered this letter as his commission would appear from the fact that Governor Pacheco in 1788 furnished a copy of it as evidence of one of the offices (*empleos*) that had been created in the Texas between 1775 and 1787 (Pacheco to Ugalde, May 29, 1788, in the Béxar Archives).

In 1797, Ybarbo, in a letter asking permission to resign his post, styled himself "Capitan de Milicias, Teniente de Govr. Militar y Politico, Jues Delegado de Contravandos y de Comisos, y Justizia Mayor del Pueblo de Nacogdoches y su jurisdiccion" (Letter to the viceroy, March 22, 1791, in the Béxar Archives).

doches, through being made the headquarters for the trade and the distribution of presents among the dozen or more tribes in whose midst it lay, became the most important Indian agency in the province, while Ybarbo, as head of the community, became among the Indians of the northeast the most influential Spaniard of his day. To Nacogdoches the government now looked for the maintenance of a counter influence among the Indians as a makeweight against the Anglo-Americans who made their way to the borders of the country; and when, in 1803, the American frontier was carried clear to Texas, Nacogdoches became equal if not superior in importance to Béxar through being at once the outpost for aggressive movements by the Americans and for resistance by the Spaniards.¹

¹It should be noted that before the Louisiana cession in 1803 the Taovayases country on the upper Red River, as well as the northeast, was looked upon as a point of special danger with respect to the Anglo-Americans.

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